TREASURE ISLAND

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"OUR LITTLE WALK ALONG THE QUAYS." --- PAGE 40

TREASURE ISLAND

BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

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Robert Louis Stevenson.

TREASURE ISLAND

CHAPTER I

THE OLD SEA DOG AT THE ADMIRAL BENBOW

SQUIRE TRELAWNEY and Doctor Livesey having asked me to write down the particulars about Treasure Island, keeping nothing back but the bearings of the island, and that only because there is still treasure not yet lifted, I take up my pen in the year of grace 17—, and go back to the time when my father kept the Admiral Benbow Inn, and the brown old seaman first took up his lodging under our roof.

I remember him as if it were yesterday, as he came plodding to the inn door, his sea-chest following behind him in a hand-barrow; a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man; his tarry pig-tail falling over the shoulders of his soiled blue coat; his hands ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails, and the saber-cut across one cheek, a dirty, livid white. I remember him looking round the cove and whistling to himself as he did so, and then breaking out in that old sea-song that he sung so often afterward:

"Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!"

in the high, old tottering voice that seemed to have been tuned and broken at the capstan bars. Then he rapped on the door, and when my father appeared, called roughly for a glass of rum. This he drank slowly, still looking about him at the cliffs and up at our signboard.

"This is a handy cove," said he, at length. "Much company,

mate?"—My father told him no, the more the pity.—"Well, then," said he, "this is the berth for me. Here you, matey," he cried to the man who trundled the barrow; "bring up alongside and help up my chest. I'll stay here a bit," he continued. "I'm a plain man; rum and bacon and eggs is what I want, and that head up there for to watch ships off. What you mought call me? You mought call me captain. Oh, I see what you're at—there"; and he threw down three or four gold pieces on the threshold. "You can tell me when I've worked through that," said he, looking as fierce as a commander.

He was a very silent man by custom. All day he hung round the cove, or upon the cliffs, with a brass telescope. Every day, when he came back from his stroll, he would ask if any seafaring men had gone by along the road. At first we thought it was the want of company of his own kind that made him ask this question; but at last we began to see he was desirous to avoid them. He took me aside one day and promised me a silver fourpenny on the first of every month if I would keep my "weather eye open for a seafaring man with one leg," and let him know the moment he appeared. How that personage haunted my dreams, I need scarcely tell you.

But though I was so terrified by the idea of the seafaring man with one leg, I was far less afraid of the captain himself than anybody else who knew him. There were nights when he took a deal more rum and water than his head would carry; and then he would sometimes sit and sing his wicked, old, wild sea-songs, minding nobody; but sometimes he would call for glasses round, and force all the trembling company to bear a chorus to his singing. Nor would he allow any one to leave the inn till he had drunk himself sleepy and reeled off to bed. My father was always saying the inn would be ruined, for people would soon cease coming there to be tyrannized over and sent shivering to their beds; but his presence did us good. People were frightened at the time; but on looking back they rather liked it; it was a fine excitement in a quiet country life.

All the time he lived with us the captain made no change whatever in his dress but to buy some stockings from a hawker. One of the cocks of his hat having fallen down, he let it hang from that day forth, though it was a great annoyance when it blew. I remember the appearance of his coat, which he patched himself, and which, before the end, was nothing but patches. He never wrote or received a letter, and he never spoke with any but the neighbors, and with these only when drunk on rum. The great sea-chest none of us had ever seen open.

He was only once crossed, and that was toward the end, when my poor father was far gone in a decline that took him off. Doctor Livesey came late one afternoon to see the patient, took a bit of dinner, and went into the parlor to smoke a pipe. I followed him in, and I remember observing the contrast the neat, bright doctor, with his powder as white as snow, and his bright, black eyes and pleasant manners, made with the coltish country folk, and, above all, with that filthy, heavy, bleared scarecrow of a pirate of ours, sitting far gone in rum, with his arms on the table. Suddenly the captain began to pipe up his eternal song:

"Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!
Drink and the devil had done for the rest—
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!"

and at last flapped his hand upon the table before him in a way we all knew to mean—silence. The voices stopped at once, all but Doctor Livesey's; he went on speaking clear and kind, and drawing briskly at his pipe between every word or two. The captain glared at him for a while, flapped his hand again, and broke out with a low oath: "Silence, there, between decks!"—"Were you addressing me, sir?" said the doctor; and when the ruffian told him, with another oath, that this was so, replied: "I have only one thing to say to you, sir, that if you

keep on drinking rum, the world will soon be quit of a very dirty scoundrel."

The old fellow's fury was awful. He sprang to his feet, drew and opened a sailor's clasp-knife, and balancing it open on the palm of his hand, threatened to pin the doctor to the wall. The doctor never so much as moved. He spoke to him over his shoulder, and in the same tone of voice, rather high, so that all the room might hear, but perfectly calm and steady: "If you do not put that knife this instant into your pocket, I promise you shall hang at the next assizes."

Then followed a battle of looks between them; but the captain soon knuckled under, put up his weapon, and resumed his seat, grumbling like a beaten dog.

"And now, sir," continued the doctor, "since I now know there's such a fellow in my district, you may count I'll have an eye upon you day and night. I'm not a doctor only, I'm a magistrate; and if I catch a breath of complaint against you, if it's only for a piece of incivility like to-night's, I'll take means to have you hunted down and routed out of this."

Soon after Doctor Livesey's horse came to the door and he rode away, but the captain held his peace that evening, and for many evenings to come.

CHAPTER II

BLACK DOG APPEARS AND DISAPPEARS

It was not very long after this that there occurred the first of the mysterious events that rid us at last of the captain, though not of his affairs. It was a bitter cold winter, with long, hard frosts and heavy gales; and it was plain from the first that my poor father was little likely to see the spring.

It was one January morning, very early—a pinching, frosty

morning—the cove all gray with hoar frost, the ripple lapping softly on the stones, the sun still low, and only touching the hill-tops and shining far to seaward. The captain had risen earlier than usual, and set out down the beach, his cutlass swinging under the broad skirts of the old blue coat, his brass telescope under his arm, his hat tilted back upon his head.

Well, mother was up-stairs with father, and I was laying the breakfast table, when the parlor door opened and a man stepped in on whom I had never set eyes before. He was a pale, tallowy creature, wanting two fingers of the left hand. I had always my eyes open for seafaring men, with one leg or two, and I remember this one puzzled me. I asked him what was for his service, and he said he would take rum, but as I was going out to fetch it he sat down upon a table and motioned to me to draw near. I paused where I was with my napkin in my hand.

"Come here, sonny," said he. "Come nearer here." I took a step nearer. "Is this here table for my mate Bill?" he asked, with a kind of leer. I told him I did not know his mate Bill, and this was for a person who stayed at our house, whom we called the captain. "Well," said he, "my mate Bill would be called the captain. He has a cut on one cheek, and a mighty pleasant way with him, particularly in drink, has my mate Bill. We'll put it, for argument like, that your captain has a cut on one cheek. Now, is my mate Bill in this here house?"

I told him he was out walking.—"Which way, sonny? Which way is he gone?" And when I had pointed out the rock and told him how the captain was likely to return, and how soon, and answered a few other questions, "Ah," said he, "this'll be as good as drink to my mate Bill."

The expression of his face as he said these words was not pleasant, and I had my own reasons for thinking that the stranger was mistaken. But it was no affair of mine, and, besides, it was difficult to know what to do. The stranger kept hanging about just inside the inn door,

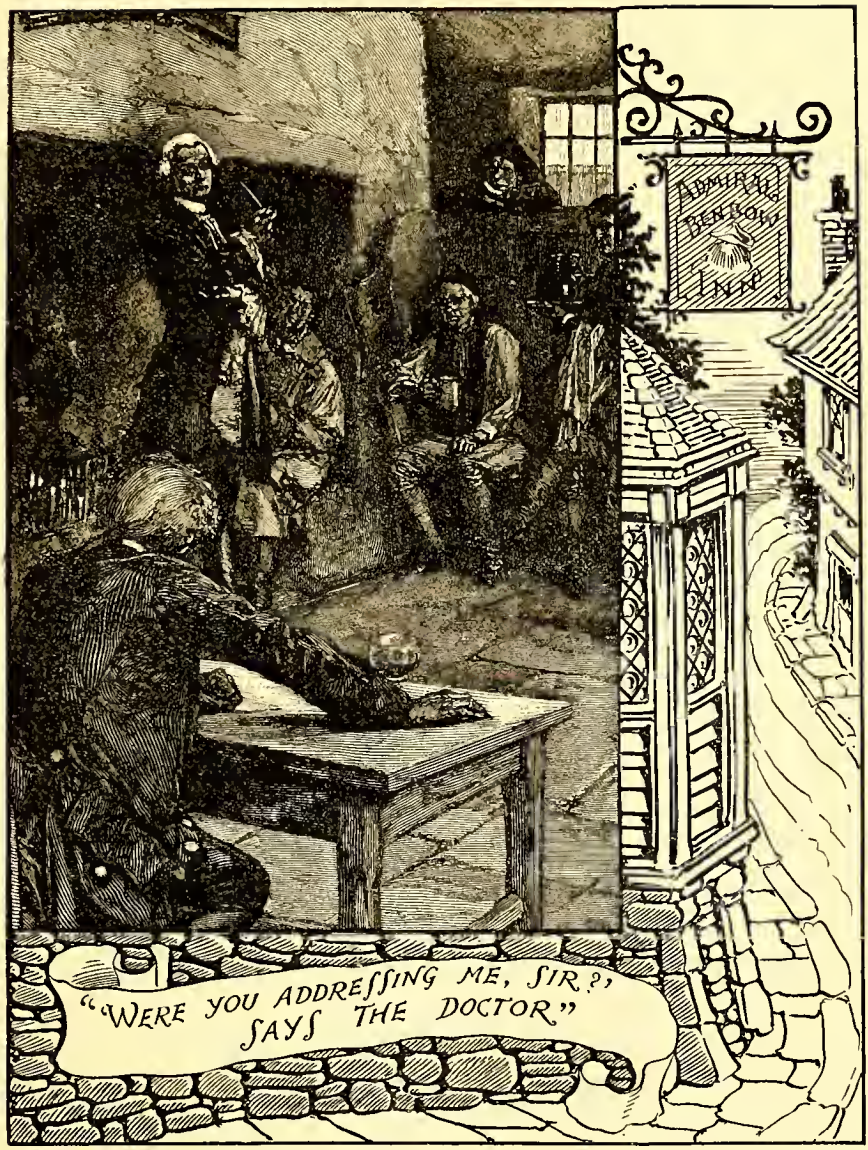
peering round the corner like a cat waiting for a mouse. Once I stepped out myself into the road, but he called me back, and, as I did not obey quick enough for his fancy, a most horrible change came over his tallowy face, and he ordered me in with an oath that made me jump.

As soon as I was back again he returned to his former manner, half-fawning, half-sneering, patted me on the shoulder, told me I was a good boy, and he had taken quite a fancy to me. "I have a son of my own," said he, "as like you as two blocks, and he's all the pride of my 'art. But the great thing for boys is discipline, sonny—discipline. Now, if you had sailed along of Bill, you wouldn't have stood there to be spoken to twice—not you. And here, sure enough, is my mate Bill, with a spy-glass under his arm, bless his old 'art, to be sure. You and me'll just go back into the parlor, sonny, and get behind the door, and we'll give Bill a little surprise—bless his 'art, I say again."

So saying, the stranger backed along with me into the parlor, and put me behind him in the corner, so that we were both hidden by the open door. I was very alarmed, and it rather added to my fears to observe that the stranger was certainly frightened himself.

At last in strode the captain, slammed the door behind him, without looking to the right or left, and marched straight across the room to where his breakfast awaited him. "Bill," said the stranger, in a voice that I thought he had tried to make bold and big. The captain spun round on his heel and fronted us; all the brown had gone out of his face, and even his nose was blue; he had the look of a man who sees a ghost, and I felt sorry to see him turn so old and sick.

"Come, Bill, you know me; you know an old shipmate, Bill, surely," said the stranger. The captain made a sort of gasp.—"Black Dog!" said he.—"And who else?" returned the other, getting more at his ease. "Black Dog as ever was, come for to see his old shipmate. Ah, Bill, Bill, we have seen a sight of times, us two, since I lost them two talons," holding up his mutilated hand.—"Now, look


ADMIRAL BENBOW
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"WERE YOU ADDRESSING ME, SIR?" SAYS THE DOCTOR.

Page 5.

here," said the captain; "you've run me down; here I am; well, then, speak up; what is it?"—"That's you, Bill," returned Black Dog; you're in the right of it, Billy. I'll have a glass of rum, and we'll sit down and talk square, like old shipmates."

When I returned with the rum they were already seated on either side of the table—Black Dog next to the door, and sitting sideways, so as to have one eye on his old shipmate and one, as I thought, on his retreat. He bade me go and leave the door wide open. "None of your keyholes for me, sonny," he said, and I left them together and retired into the bar.

For a long time, though I certainly did my best to listen, I could hear nothing but a low gabbling; but at last the voices began to grow higher, and I could pick up a word or two, mostly oaths, from the captain. "No, no, no, no; and an end of it!" he cried once. And again, "If it comes to swinging, swing all, say I."

Then all of a sudden there was an explosion of oaths; the chair and table went over in a lump, a clash of steel followed. and then a cry of pain, and the next instant I saw Black Dog in full flight, and the captain hotly pursuing, both with drawn cutlasses. Just at the door the captain aimed at the fugitive one last tremendous cut, which would certainly have split him to the chine had it not been intercepted by our big signboard of Admiral Benbow.

That blow was the last of the battle. Once out upon the road, Black Dog showed a wonderful clean pair of heels, and disappeared over the edge of the hill in half a minute. The captain stood staring at the signboard like a bewildered man. Then he passed his hand over his eyes and turned back into the house. "Jim," says he, "rum"; and as he spoke he reeled a little, and caught himself with one hand against the wall.—"Are you hurt?" cried I.—"Rum," he repeated, "I must get away from here. Rum! rum!"

I ran to fetch it, but I was quite unsteadied by all that had fallen out, and while I was still getting in my own way, I heard a loud fall in

the parlor, and, running in, beheld the captain lying full length upon the floor. At the same instant my mother, alarmed by the cries and fighting, came running down-stairs to help me. Between us we raised his head. He was breathing very loud and hard, and his face was a horrible color. "Dear, deary me!" cried my mother, "what a disgrace upon the house. And your poor father sick."

In the meantime we had no idea what to do to help the captain, nor any other thought but that he had got his death-hurt in the scuffle with the stranger. I got the rum, and tried to put it down his throat, but his teeth were tightly shut, and his jaws as strong as iron. It was a happy relief for us when the door opened and Doctor Livesey came in, on his visit to my father. "Oh, doctor," we cried, "what shall we do? Where is he wounded?"

"Wounded!" said the doctor. "No more wounded than you or I. The man has had a stroke, as I warned him. Now, Mrs. Hawkins, just you run up-stairs to your husband and tell him, if possible, nothing about it. Jim here will get me a basin."

When I got back with the basin the doctor had already ripped up the captain's sleeve and exposed his great sinewy arm. It was tattooed in several places. "Here's luck," "A fair wind," and "Billy Bones, his fancy," were very neatly executed on the forearm; and up near the shoulder there was a sketch of a gallows and a man hanging from it—done, as I thought, with great spirit.

"Prophetic," said the doctor, touching this picture with his finger. "And now, Master Billy Bones, if that be your name, we'll have a look at the color of your blood. Jim," he said, "are you afraid of blood?"—"No, sir," said I.—"Well, then," said he, "you hold the basin," and with that he took his lancet and opened a vein.

A great deal of blood was taken before the captain opened his eyes and looked mistily about him. First he recognized the doctor with a frown; then his glance fell upon me, and he looked relieved. But suddenly his color changed, and he tried to raise himself, crying:

"Where's Black Dog?"—"There is no Black Dog here," said the doctor, "except what you have on your own back. You have been drinking rum; you have had a stroke, as I told you; and I have just dragged you headforemost out of the grave. Now, Mr. Bones——"

"That's not my name," he interrupted.—"Much I care," returned the doctor. "It's the name of a buccaneer of my acquaintance and I call you by it for the sake of shortness, and what I have to say to you is this: One glass of rum won't kill you, but if you take one you'll take another and another, and I stake my wig if you don't break off short, you'll die; do you understand that? die, and go to your own place, like the man in the Bible. Come, now, make an effort. I'll help you to your bed for once."

Between us, we managed to hoist him up-stairs, and laid him on his bed, where his head fell back on the pillow. "Now, mind you," said the doctor, "I clear my conscience—the name of rum for you is death." And with that he went off to see my father, taking me with him by the arm. "This is nothing," he said, as soon as he had closed the door. "I have drawn blood enough to keep him quiet awhile; he should lie for a week where he is—that is the best thing for him and you, but another stroke would settle him."

CHAPTER III

THE BLACK SPOT

About noon I stopped at the captain's door with some cooling drinks and medicines. He was lying very much as we had left him, and he seemed both weak and excited. "Jim," he said, "you're the only one here that's worth anything; and you know I've always been good to you. And now you see, mate, I'm pretty low, and Jim, you'll bring me one noggin of rum, now won't you, matey?"—"The doctor—" I began.

But he broke in cursing the doctor. "Doctors is all swabs," he said; "and that doctor there, why, what do he know about seafaring men? I been in places hot as pitch, and mates dropping round with yellow jack, and the blessed land a-heaving like the sea with earthquakes—what do the doctor know of lands like that?—and I lived on rum, I tell you. It's been meat and drink, and man and wife, to me; and if I'm not to have my rum now I'm a poor old hulk on a lee shore. Look, Jim," he continued in the pleading tone, "I haven't had a drop this blessed day. If I don't have a drain o' rum, Jim, I'll have the horrors; I seen some on 'em already. I seen old Flint in the corner there, behind you; as plain as print, I seen him; and if I get the horrors, I'll raise Cain. Your doctor hisself said one glass wouldn't hurt me. I'll give you a golden guinea for a noggin, Jim."

He was growing more and more excited, and this alarmed me, for my father, who was very low that day, needed quiet; besides, I was reassured by the doctor's words. "I want none of your money," said I, "but what you owe my father. I'll get you one glass and no more."

When I brought it to him he seized it greedily and drank it out. "Ay, ay," said he, "that's some better, sure enough. And now, matey, did that doctor say how long I was to lie here in this old berth?"—"A week at least," said I.—"Thunder!" he cried, "a week! I can't do that; they'd have a black spot on me by then. The lubbers is going about to get the wind of me this blessed moment; lubbers as couldn't keep what they got, and want to nail what is another's. Is that seamanly behavior, now, I want to know? But I'm a saving soul. I never wasted good money of mine, and I'll trick 'em again. I'll shake out another reef, matey, and daddle 'em again."

As he was speaking, he had risen from bed with great difficulty, holding my shoulder with a grip that almost made me cry out, and moving his legs like so much dead weight. He paused when he had got into a sitting position on the edge. "That doctor's done me," he murmured. "My ears is singing. Lay me back." Before I could do much

to help him he had fallen baek again to his former plaee, where he lay for awhile silent.

"Jim," he said, at length, "you saw that seafaring man to-day?" —"Blaek Dog?" I asked.—"Ah! Blaek Dog," said he. "*He's* a bad 'un; but there's worse that put him on. Now, if I ean't get away nohow, and they tip me the blaek spot, mind you, it's my old sea-ehest they're after; you get on a horse—you ean, ean't you? Well, then, you get on a horse and go to—to that eternal doetor swab, and tell him to pipe all hands—magistrates and sieh—and he'll lay 'em aboard at the Admiral Benbow—all old Flint's erew, man and boy, all on 'em that's left. I was first mate, I was, old Flint's first mate, and I'm the on'y one as knows the plaee. He gave it me to Savannah, when he lay a-dying. But you won't peach unless they get the blaek spot on me, or unless you see that Blaek Dog again, or a seafaring man with one leg, Jim—him above all."—"But what is the blaek spot, eaptain?" I asked.—"That's a summons, mate. I'll tell you if they get that. But you keep your weather-eye open, Jim, and I'll share with you equals, upon my honor."

He wandered a little longer, his voiee growing weaker; but soon after I had given him his medieine, he fell into a heavy sleep, in whieh I left him. What I should have done had all gone well I do not know. But as things fell out, my poor father died quite suddenly that evening, whieh put all other matters on one side. Our natural distress, the visits of the neighbors, the arranging of the funeral, and all the work of the inn to be earried on in the meanwhile, kept me so busy that I had seareely time to think of the eaptain, far less to be afraid of him.

He got down-stairs next morning, and had his meals as usual, though he eat little, and had more, I am afraid, than his usual supply of rum, for he helped himself out of the bar, seowling and blowing through his nose, and no one dared to eross him. Weak as he was, we were all in fear of death for him, and the doetor was suddenly

taken up with a case many miles away, and was never near the house after my father's death. The captain was weak, and seemed rather to grow weaker than to regain his strength. He clambered up and down-stairs, and went from the parlor to the bar and back again, and sometimes put his nose out-of-doors to smell the sea. He never addressed me, but his temper was more flighty, and, allowing for his bodily weakness, more violent than ever. He had an alarming way, now, when he was drunk, of drawing his cutlass and laying it bare before him on the table. But, with all that, he minded people less, and seemed shut up in his own thoughts and rather wandering. Once he piped up to a different air, a kind of country love-song, that he must have learned in his youth before he had begun to follow the sea.

So things passed until the day after the funeral and about three o'clock of a bitter, foggy, frosty afternoon, I was standing at the door, when I saw some one drawing slowly near along the road. He was plainly blind, for he tapped before him with a stick, and wore a great green shade over his eyes and nose; and he was hunched, as if with age or weakness, and wore a huge old tattered sea-cloak with a hood that made him appear deformed. He stopped a little from the inn, and raising his voice in an old sing-song, addressed the air in front of him. "Will any kind friend inform a poor blind man, who has lost the precious sight of his eyes in the gracious defense of his native country, England, and God bless King George!—where or in what part of this country he may now be?"—"You are at the Admiral Benbow, Black Hill Cove," said I.—"I hear a voice," said he, "a young voice. Will you give me your hand, my kind young friend, and lead me in?"

I held out my hand, and the horrible eyeless creature gripped it in a moment like a vise. I was so much startled that I struggled to withdraw, but the blind man pulled me close up to him with a single action of his arm. "Now, boy," he said, "take me in to the captain."—"Sir," said I, "upon my word I dare not."—"Oh," he sneered, "that's it!

'Take me in straight, or I'll break your arm." He gave it, as he spoke, a wrench that made me cry out.

"Sir," said I, "it is for yourself I mean. The captain is not what he used to be. He sits with a drawn cutlass. Another gentleman——"

"Come, now, march," interrupted he, and I never heard a voice so cruel, and cold, and ugly, as that blind man's. I began to obey him at once, walking straight in at the door and toward the parlor, where the sick old buccaneer was sitting, dazed with rum. The blind man clung close to me, holding me in one iron fist.—"Lead me straight up to him, and when I'm in view, cry out, 'Here's a friend for you, Bill.' If you don't, I'll do this," and with that he gave me a twitch that I thought would have made me faint. I was so terrified by the blind beggar that I forgot my terror of the captain, and as I opened the parlor door, cried out the words he had ordered in a trembling voice.

The captain raised his eyes, and at one look the rum went out of him and left him staring sober. He made a movement to rise, but I do not believe he had enough force left in his body.—"Now, Bill, sit where you are," said the beggar. "If I can't see, I can hear a finger stirring. Business is business. Hold out your left hand. Boy, take his left hand by the wrist and bring it near to my right." We both obeyed him to the letter, and I saw him pass something from the hollow of the hand that held his stick into the palm of the captain's, which closed upon it instantly.

"And now that's done," said the blind man, and at the words he suddenly left hold of me, and with incredible accuracy and nimbleness, skipped out of the parlor and into the road, where, as I stood motionless, I could hear his stick go tap-tap-tapping into the distance.

It was some time before either I or the captain seemed to gather our senses; but at length, and about the same moment, I released his wrist, which I was still holding, and he drew in his hand, and looked sharply into the palm. "Ten o'clock!" he cried. "Six hours! We'll do them yet!" and he sprang to his feet. Even as he did so, he reeled,

put his hand to his throat, stood swaying for a moment, and then, with a peculiar sound, fell face foremost to the floor. I ran to him, calling my mother. But haste was all in vain. The captain had been struck dead by apoplexy.

CHAPTER IV

THE SEA-CHEST

I lost no time in telling my mother all that I knew, and we saw ourselves at once in a difficult and dangerous position. Some of the man's money was certainly due to us, but it was not likely that our captain's shipmates would be inclined to give up their booty in payment of the dead man's debts. The captain's order to mount at once and ride for Doctor Livesey would have left my mother alone and unprotected, which was not to be thought of. Indeed, it seemed impossible for either of us to remain much longer in the house; the fall of coals in the kitchen grate, the very ticking of the clock, filled us with alarm.

The neighborhood, to our ears, seemed haunted by approaching footsteps; and what between the dead body of the captain on the parlor floor and the thought of that blind beggar hovering near at hand, there were moments when I jumped in my skin for terror. Something must speedily be resolved upon, and it occurred to us to seek help in the neighboring hamlet. No sooner said than done. Bareheaded as we were, we ran out in the gathering evening and the frosty fog.

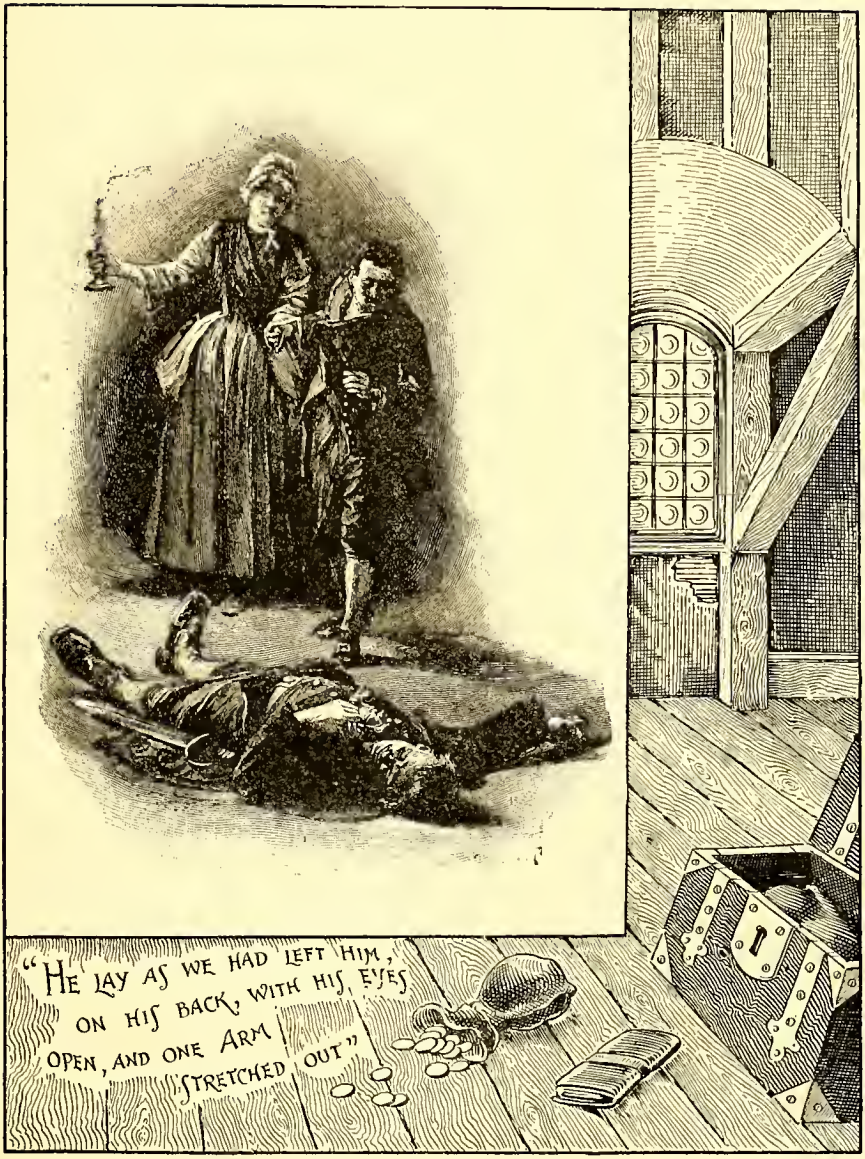
The hamlet lay some hundred yards away on the other side of the next cove, in an opposite direction from that whence the blind man had made his appearance, and whither he had presumably returned. We were not many minutes on the road, though we sometimes stopped to harken. But there was no unusual sound—nothing but the low wash of the ripple and the croaking of the crows in the wood.

It was already candle-light when we reached the hamlet, and I

shall never forget how much I was cheered to see the yellow shine in doors and windows; but that, as it proved, was the best help we were likely to get in that quarter. For no soul would consent to return with us. The more we told of our troubles, the more they clung to the shelter of their houses. The name of Captain Flint was well enough known to some there, and carried a great weight of terror. Some of the men remembered, besides, to have seen several strangers on the road, and, taking them to be smugglers, to have bolted away; and one at least had seen a little lugger in what we call Kitt's Hole. And the short and the long of the matter was, that while we could get several who were willing enough to ride to Doctor Livesey's, not one would help us to defend the inn.

They say cowardice is infectious; but then argument is a great emboldener; and so when each had his say, my mother made them a speech. She would not, she declared, lose money that belonged to her fatherless boy. "If none of the rest of you dare," said she, "Jim and I dare. Back we will go, the way we came, and small thanks to you big, hulking, chicken-hearted men! We'll have that chest open, if we die for it. And I'll thank you for that bag, Mrs. Crossley, to bring back our lawful money in."

Of course I said I would go with my mother; and of course they all cried out at our foolhardiness; but all they would do was to give me a loaded pistol, and to promise to have horses ready saddled, in case we were pursued on our return; while one lad was to ride forward to the doctor's in search of armed assistance. My heart was beating fiercely when we set forth. A full moon was beginning to rise, and it was plain, before we came forth again, that all would be bright as day, and our departure exposed to the eyes of any watchers. We slipped along the hedges, nor did we see or hear anything till, to our huge relief, the door of the Admiral Benbow had closed behind us. I slipped the bolt at once, and we stood and panted for a moment in the dark, alone in the house with the dead captain's body. Then my


"HE LAY AS WE HAD LEFT HIM, ON HIS BACK, WITH HIS EYES OPEN, AND ONE ARM STRETCHED OUT"

Page 20.

mother got a candle and we advanced into the parlor. He lay as we had left him, on his back with his eyes open, and one arm stretched out.

"Draw down the blind, Jim," whispered my mother; "they might come and watch outside. And now," said she, when I had done so, "we have to get the key." I went down on my knees at once. On the floor close to his hand there was a little round of paper, blackened on one side. I could not doubt that this was the *black spot*; and, taking it up, I found written on the other side, "You have till ten to-night." —"He had till ten, mother," said I; and, just as I said it, our old clock began striking. It was only six.—"Now, Jim," she said, "that key!" I felt in his pockets, one after another. A few small coins, a thimble, and some thread and needles, a piece of pigtail tobacco, a pocket compass, and a tinder-box, were all that they contained, and I began to despair.—"Perhaps it's round his neck," suggested my mother. I tore open his shirt at the neck, and there, sure enough, hanging to a bit of tarry string, we found the key. At this triumph we were filled with hope, and hurried up-stairs to the little room where his box had stood since the day of his arrival.

"Give me the key," said my mother, and though the lock was very stiff, she had turned it and thrown back the lid in a twinkling. A strong smell of tobacco and tar arose from the interior, but nothing was to be seen on the top except a suit of very good clothes, carefully brushed and folded. Under that the miscellany began—a quadrant, several sticks of tobacco, two brace of very handsome pistols, a piece of bar silver, and some trinkets of little value, a pair of compasses mounted with brass, and five or six curious West Indian shells. Underneath there was an old boat-cloak, whitened with sea-salt on many a harbor-bar. My mother pulled it up with impatience, and there lay before us, a bundle tied up in oil-cloth, and looking like papers, and a canvas bag that gave forth, at a touch, the jingle of gold.

"I'll show those rogues that I'm an honest woman," said my mother. "I'll have my dues and not a farthing over. Hold Mrs.

Crossley's bag." And she began to count over the amount of the captain's score from the sailor's bag into the one that I was holding.

When we were about half-way through, I suddenly put my hand upon her arm, for I had heard in the silent air a sound that brought my heart into my mouth—the tap-tapping of the blind man's stick upon the frozen road. It drew nearer and nearer, while we sat holding our breath. Then it struck sharp on the inn door, and then we could hear the handle being turned, and the bolt rattling as the wretched being tried to enter; and then there was a long time of silence. At last the tapping recommenced, and to our joy, died slowly away again.

"Mother," said I, "take the whole and let's be going." But my mother, frightened as she was, would not consent to take a fraction more than was due to her. It was not yet seven, she said, and she was still arguing with me, when a little low whistle sounded a good way off upon the hill. That was enough, and more than enough, for both of us. "I'll take what I have," she said, jumping to her feet.—"And I'll take this to square the count," said I, picking up the oilskin packet.

Next moment we were both groping down-stairs, leaving the candle by the empty chest; and the next we had opened the door and were in full retreat. We had not started a moment too soon. The fog was rapidly dispersing; already the moon shone quite clear on the high ground on either side, and it was only in the exact bottom of the dell and round the tavern door that a thin veil still hung. Far less than half-way to the hamlet, very little beyond the bottom of the hill, we must come forth into the moonlight. Nor was this all; for the sound of several footsteps running came to our ears, and as we looked back, a light, rapidly advancing, showed that one of the newcomers carried a lantern.

"My dear," said my mother suddenly, "take the money and run on. I am going to faint." We were just at the little bridge, and I helped her to the edge of the bank, where, sure enough, she fell on my

shoulder. I do not know how I found the strength to do it, but I managed to drag her down the bank and a little way under the arch. Farther I could not move her; so there we had to stay—my mother almost entirely exposed, and both of us within ear-shot of the inn.

CHAPTER V

THE LAST OF THE BLIND MAN

My curiosity was stronger than my fear; for I could not remain where I was, but crept back to the bank again, whence I might command the road before our door. I was scarcely in position ere my enemies began to arrive, seven or eight of them, running hard, the man with the lantern some paces in front. Three men ran together, hand in hand; and I made out that the middle man of this trio was the blind beggar. The next moment his voice showed me that I was right. "Down with the door!" he cried.—"Ay, ay, sir!" answered two or three; and a rush was made upon the Admiral Benbow, the lantern-bearer following; and then I could see them pause, as if they were surprised to find the door open. But the pause was brief, for the blind man again issued his commands. His voice sounded louder and higher, as if he were afire with eagerness and rage. "In, in, in!" he shouted, and cursed them for their delay.

Four or five of them obeyed at once. There was a pause, then a cry of surprise, and then a voice shouting from the house: "Bill's dead!" But the blind man swore at them again for their delay. "Search him, some of you shirking lubbers, and the rest of you aloft and get the chest," he cried.

I could hear their feet rattling up our old stairs, so that the house must have shook with it. Promptly afterward fresh sounds of astonishment arose; the window of the captain's room was thrown open

with a slam, and a man leaned out into the moonlight, head and shoulders, and addressed the blind beggar on the road below him. "Pew!" he cried, "they've been before us. Some one's turned the chest out alow and aloft."—"Is it there?" roared Pew.—"The money's there." —The blind man cursed the money. "Flint's fist, I mean," he cried. —"We don't see it here, nohow," returned the man.—"Here, you below here, is it on Bill?" cried the blind man again. At that another fellow, probably him who had remained below to search the captain's body, came to the door of the inn.—"Bill's been overhauled a'ready," said he, "nothin' left."—"It's these people of the inn—it's that boy. I wish I had put his eyes out!" cried the blind man. "They were here no time ago—they had the door bolted when I tried it. Scatter, lads, and find 'em."—"Sure enough, they left their glim here," said the fellow from the window.—"Scatter and find 'em! Rout the house out!" reiterated Pew, striking with his stick upon the road.

Then there followed a great to-do through all our old inn, heavy feet pounding to and fro, furniture all thrown over, doors kicked in, until the very rocks re-echoed, and the men came out again, one after another, on the road, and declared that we were nowhere to be found. Just then the same whistle that had alarmed my mother and myself was clearly audible through the night, but this time twice repeated. I had thought it to be the blind man summoning his crew to the assault; but I now found that it was a signal from the hillside toward the hamlet, and from its effect upon the buccaneers, a signal to warn them of approaching danger.—"There's Dirk again," said one.—"Twice! We'll have to budge, mates."—"Budge, you skulk!" cried Pew. "Dirk was a fool and a coward from the first—you wouldn't mind him. They must be close by; scatter and look for them, dogs. Oh, shiver my soul," he cried, "if I had eyes!"

This appeal seemed to produce some effect, for two of the fellows began to look here and there among the lumber, but half-heartedly, and with half an eye to their own danger all the time, while the rest

stood irresolute on the road.—"You have your hands on thousands, you fools, and you hang a leg! You'd be as rich as kings if you could find it, and you know it's here, and you stand there malingering. There wasn't one of you dared face Bill, and I did it—a blind man! And I'm to lose my chance for you! I'm to be a poor, crawling beggar, sponging for rum, when I might be rolling in a coach! If you had the pluck of a weevil in a biscuit, you would catch them still." —"Hang it, Pew, we've got the doubloons!" grumbled one.—"They might have hid the blessed thing," said another.—"Take the Georges, Pew, and don't stand here squalling."

Squalling was the word for it; Pew's anger rose so high at these objections, till at last he struck at them right and left in his blindness, and his stick sounded heavily on more than one. These, in their turn, threatened him in horrid terms, and tried to catch the stick and wrest it from his grasp.

This quarrel was the saving of us; for while it was still raging, another sound came from the top of the hill on the side of the hamlet —the tramp of horses galloping. Almost at the same time a pistol-shot came from the hedge-side. And that was plainly the last signal of danger, for the buccaneers turned at once and ran, one seaward along the cove, one slant across the hill, and so on, so that in half a minute not a sign of them remained but Pew. Him they had deserted, and there he remained, tapping up and down the road in a frenzy, and calling for his comrades. Finally he took the wrong turn, and ran a few steps past me, toward the hamlet, crying, "Johnny, Black Dog, Dirk," and other names, "you won't leave old Pew, mates—not old Pew?"

Just then the noise of horses topped the rise, and four or five riders came in sight, and swept down the slope. At this Pew saw his error, turned with a scream, and ran straight for the ditch, into which he rolled. But he was on his feet again in a second, and made another dash, now utterly bewildered, right under the nearest of the coming

horses. The rider tried to save him, but in vain. Down went Pew, and the four hoofs trampled him and passed by. He fell on his side, and moved no more. I leaped to my feet and hailed the riders. They were pulling up, and I soon saw what they were. One was a lad that had gone from the hamlet to Doctor Livesey's; the rest were revenue officers, whom he had met by the way. Some news of the lugger in Kitt's Hole had found its way to Supervisor Dance, and sent him forth that night in our direction, and to that circumstance my mother and I owed our preservation from death.

Pew was dead, stone dead. As for my mother, when we had carried her up to the hamlet, a little cold water and salts very soon brought her back again, and she was none the worse for her terror, though she still continued to deplore the balance of the money.

In the meantime the supervisor rode on to Kitt's Hole; but his men had to dismount and grope down the dingle, in continual fear of ambushers; so it was no great matter for surprise that when we got down the lugger was already under way. He hailed her. A voice replied, telling him to keep out of the moonlight, or he would get some lead in him, and at the same time a bullet whistled close by his arm. Soon after the lugger doubled the point and disappeared. All he could do was to dispatch a man to B—— to warn the cutter. "And that," said he, "is just about as good as nothing. They've got off clean, and there's an end. Only," he added, "I'm glad I trod on Master Pew's corns,"—for by this time he had heard my story.

I went back with him to the Admiral Benbow, and you can not imagine a house in such a state of smash; the very clock had been thrown down in the furious hunt, and though nothing had actually been taken away except the captain's money-bag and a little silver from the till, I could see at once that we were ruined. Mr. Dance could make nothing of the scene.

"They got the money, you say? Well, then, Hawkins, what in fortune were they after? More money, I suppose?"—"No, sir; not

money, I think," replied I.—"I believe I have the thing in my breast-pocket; and, to tell you the truth, I should like to get it put in safety."—"To be sure, boy; quite right," said he. "I'll take it, if you like."—"I thought, perhaps, Doctor Livesey—" I began.—"Perfectly right," he interrupted, "perfectly right—a gentleman and a magistrate. And, now I come to think of it, I might as well ride round there myself and report to him or squire. Master Pew's dead, when all's done; not that I regret it, but he's dead, you see, and people will make it out against an officer of his majesty's revenue, if make it out they can. Now, I'll tell you, Hawkins, if you like, I'll take you along." I thanked him for the offer, and we walked back to the hamlet where the horses were. By the time I had told mother of my purpose they were all in the saddle.

"Dogger," said Mr. Dance, "you have a good horse; take up this lad behind you." As soon as I was mounted, the supervisor gave the word, and the party struck out at a bouncing trot on the road to Doctor Livesey's house.

CHAPTER VI

THE CAPTAIN'S PAPERS

We rode hard all the way, till we drew up before Doctor Livesey's door. The house was all dark in front. Dance told me to jump down and knock, and Dogger gave me a stirrup to descend by. The door was opened by the maid. "Is Doctor Livesey in?" I asked.—"No," she said. He had gone up to the Hall to dine and pass the evening with the squire.—"So there we go, boys," said Mr. Dance.

This time, as the distance was short, I did not mount, but ran to the lodge gates, and up the long, moonlit avenue to where the white line of the Hall buildings looked on either hand on great old gardens.

Here Dance dismounted, and taking me along with him, was admitted at a word into the house.

The servant led us down a matted passage, and showed us at the end into a great library, all lined with book-cases, where the squire and Doctor Livesey sat, pipe in hand, on either side of the bright fire. I had never seen the squire so near at hand. He was a tall man, over six feet high, and he had a bluff face, all roughened and lined in his long travels. His eyebrows were very black, and moved readily, and this gave him a look of some temper, not bad, you would say, but quick and high. "Come in, Mr. Dance," said he, very stately and condescending. "Good-evening, Dance," said the doctor, with a nod. "And good-evening to you, friend Jim. What good wind brings you here?"

The supervisor stood up straight and stiff, and told his story like a lesson; and you should have seen how the two gentlemen leaned forward and looked at each other, and forgot to smoke in their interest. When they heard how my mother went back to the inn, Doctor Livesey fairly slapped his thigh, and the squire cried "Bravo." Long before it was done, Mr. Trelawney (that was the squire's name) had got up from his seat, and was striding about the room, and the doctor, as if to hear the better, had taken off his powdered wig, and sat there, looking very strange indeed with his own close-cropped, black poll. At last Dance finished the story.

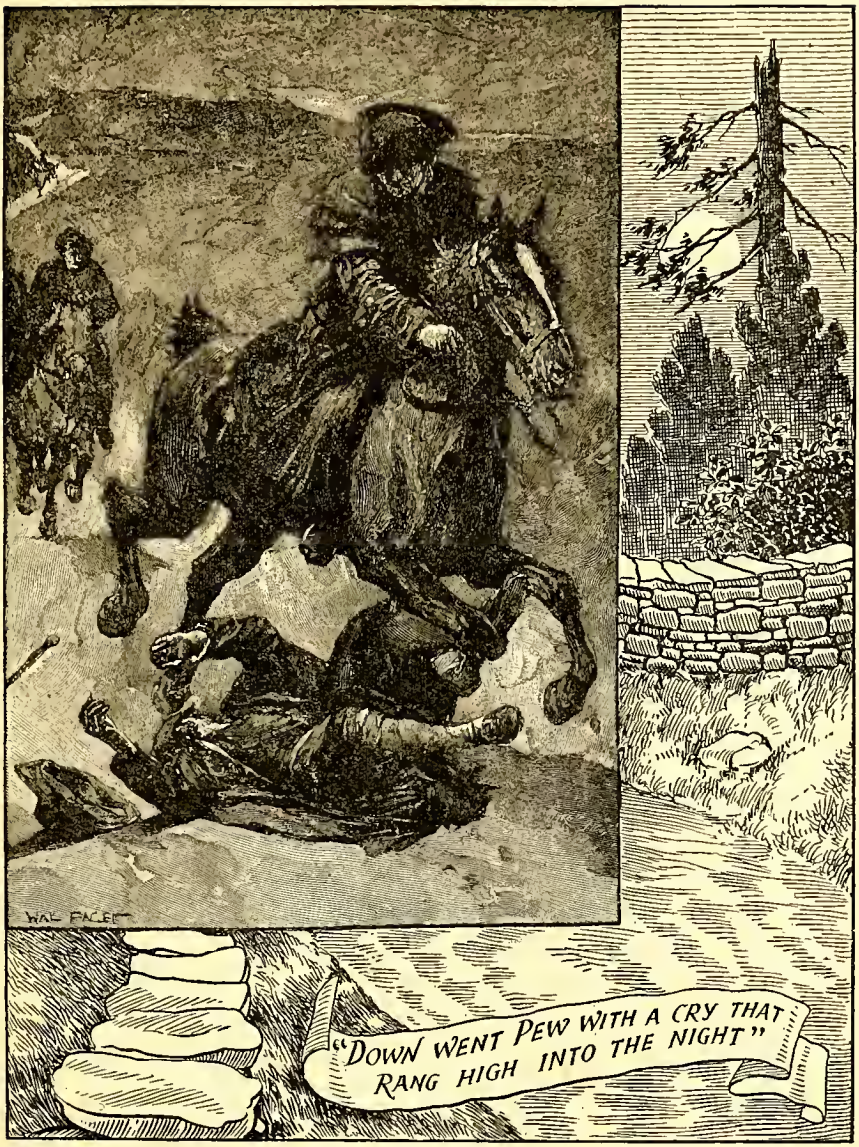
"Dance," said the squire, "you are a very noble fellow. And as for riding down that black, atrocious miscreant, I regard it as an act of virtue, sir, like stamping on a cockroach. This lad Hawkins is a trump, I perceive. Hawkins, will you ring that bell? Dance must have some ale."

"And so, Jim," said the doctor, "you have the thing that they were after, have you?"—"Here it is, sir," said I, and gave him the oil-skin packet. The doctor looked it all over, as if his fingers were itching to open it; but, instead of doing that, he put it quietly in the

pocket of his coat.—"Squire," said he, "when Dance has had his ale he must, of course, be off on his majesty's service; but I mean to keep Jim Hawkins here to sleep at my house, and, with your permission, I propose we should have up the cold pie, and let him sup."—"As you will, Livesey," said the squire; "Hawkins has earned better than cold pie." So a big pigeon pie was brought in and put on a side-table, and I made a hearty supper, for I was as hungry as a hawk, while Dance was further complimented, and at last dismissed.

"And now, squire," said the doctor.—"And now, Livesey," said the squire, in the same breath.—"One at a time," laughed Doctor Livesey. "You have heard of this Flint, I suppose?"—"Heard of him!" cried the squire. "He was the bloodthirstiest buccaneer that sailed. The Spaniards were so afraid of him that I was sometimes proud he was an Englishman."—"Well, I've heard of him myself, in England," said the doctor. "But the point is, had he money?"—"Money!" cried the squire. "Have you heard the story? What were these villains after but money? What do they care for but money? For what would they risk their rascal carcasses but money?"—"That we shall soon know," replied the doctor. "But you are so confoundedly hot-headed and exclamatory that I can not get a word in. What I want to know is this: Supposing that I have here in my pocket some clew to where Flint buried his treasure, will that treasure amount to much?"—"Amount, sir!" cried the squire. "It will amount to this: If we have the clew you talk about, I fit out a ship in Bristol dock, and take you and Hawkins here along, and I'll have that treasure if I search a year."—"Very well," said the doctor. "Now, then, if Jim is agreeable, we'll open the packet," and he laid it before him on the table.

The bundle was sewn together, and the doctor had to cut the stitches with his medical scissors. It contained two things—a book and a sealed paper. "First of all we'll try the book," observed the doctor.


WAL PAGET
"DOWN WENT PEW WITH A CRY THAT RANG HIGH INTO THE NIGHT"

Page 25.

On the first page there were only some scraps of writing, such as a man with a pen in his hand might make for idleness or practice. One was the same as the tattoo mark, "Billy Bones his fancy"; then there was "Mr. W. Bones, mate," "No more rum," and some other snatches, mostly single words.—"Not much instruction there," said Doctor Livesey, as he passed on.

The next ten or twelve pages were filled with a curious series of entries. There was a date at one end of the line and at the other a sum of money, as in common account-books; but instead of explanatory writing, only a varying number of crosses between the two. On the 12th of June, 1745, for instance, a sum of seventy pounds had plainly become due to some one, and there was nothing but six crosses to explain the cause. In a few cases, to be sure, the name of a place would be added, as "Offe Caraceas"; or a mere entry of latitude and longitude, as "62 deg. 17 min. 20 sec., 19 deg. 2 min. 40 sec." The record lasted over nearly twenty years, the amount of the separate entries growing larger as time went on, and at the end a grand total had been made out, and these words appended, "Bones his pile."

"I can't make head or tail of this," said Doctor Livesey.—"The thing is as clear as noonday," cried the squire. "This is the black-hearted hound's account-book. These crosses stand for the names of ships or towns that they sunk or plundered. The sums are the scoundrel's share, and where he feared an ambiguity, you see he added something clearer. 'Offe Caraccas,' now; you see here was some unhappy vessel boarded off that coast."—"Right!" said the doctor. "See what it is to be a traveler. Right! And the amounts increase, you see, as he rose in rank." There was little else in the volume but a few bearings of places noted in the blank leaves toward the end, and a table for reducing French, English, and Spanish moneys to a common value. "Thrifty man!" cried the doctor. "He wasn't the one to be cheated." —"And now," said the squire, "for the other."

The paper had been sealed in several places. The doctor opened

the seals with great care, and there fell out the map of an island, with latitude and longitude, soundings, names of hills and bays and inlets, and every particular that would be needed to bring a ship to a safe anchorage upon its shores. It was about nine miles long and five across, and had two fine land-locked harbors, and a hill in the center marked "The Spy-glass." There were several additions of a later date; but, above all, three crosses of red ink, two on the north part of the island, one in the southwest, and, beside this last, in the same red ink, and in a small, neat hand, very different from the captain's tottery characters, these words: "Bulk of treasure here." Over on the back the same hand had written this further information:

"Tall tree, Spy-glass shoulder, bearing a point to the N. of N. N. E.

"Skeleton Island E. S. E. and by E.

"Ten feet.

"The bar silver is in the north cache; you can find it by the trend of the east hummock, ten fathoms south of the black crag with the face on it.

"The arms are easy found, in the sandhill, N. point of north inlet cape, bearing E. and a quarter N. J. F."

That was all, but brief as it was, it filled the squire and Doctor Livesey with delight. "Livesey," said the squire, "you will give up this wretched practice at once. To-morrow I start for Bristol. In three weeks' time—three weeks!—two weeks—ten days—we'll have the best ship, sir, and the choicest crew in England. Hawkins shall come as cabin-boy. You'll make a famous cabin-boy, Hawkins. You, Livesey, are ship's doctor; I am admiral. We'll take Redruth, Joyce, and Hunter. We'll have favorable winds and a quick passage, and not the least difficulty in finding the spot, and money to eat—to roll in—to play duck and drake with ever after."—"Trelawney," said the doctor, "I'll go with you; and I'll go bail for it; so will Jim, and be a credit to the undertaking. There's only one man I'm afraid of."—

"And who is that?" eried the squire. "Name the dog, sir!"—"You," replied the doctor, "for you ean not hold your tongue. We are not the only men who know of this paper. These fellows who attacked the inn to-night—bold, desperate blades, for sure—and the rest who stayed aboard that lugger are one and all bound that they'll get that money. We must none of us go alone till we get to sea. Jim and I shall stiek together in the meanwhile; you'll take Joyce and Hunter when you ride to Bristol, and, from first to last, not one of us must breathe a word of what we've found."—"Livesey," returned the squire, "you are always in the right of it. I'll be as silent as the grave."

CHAPTER VII

I GO TO BRISTOL

It was longer than the squire imagined ere we were ready for the sea, and none of our first plans eould be carried out as we intended. The doctor had to go to London for a physieian to take eharge of his praetiee; the squire was hard at work at Bristol; and I lived on at the Hall under the charge of old Redruth, the game-keeper. One fine day there came a letter addressed to Doctor Livesey, with this addition, "To be opened in the ease of his absence, by Tom Redruth or Young Hawkins." Obeying this order, we found, or rather I found—for the game-keeper was a poor hand at reading anything but print—the following important news:

"Old Anehorage Inn, at Bristol, Mareh 1, 17—.

"Dear Livesey: As I do not know whether you are at the Hall or still in London, I send this in double to both plaees.

"The ship is bought and fitted. She lies at anchor, ready for sea. You never imagined a sweeter sehooner, two hundred tons; name, Hispaniola.

"I got her through my old friend, Blandly, who has proved himself throughout the most surprising trump. The admirable fellow literally slaved in my interest, and so, I may say, did every one in Bristol, as soon as they got wind of the port we sailed for—treasure, I mean.

"Blandly himself found the Hispaniola, and by the most admirable management got her for the merest trifle. There is a class of men in Bristol monstrously prejudiced against Blandly. They go the length of declaring that this honest creature would do anything for money; that the Hispaniola belonged to him and that he sold it to me absurdly high—the most transparent calumnies. None of them dare, however, to deny the merits of the ship. So far there was not a hitch. The work-people, to be sure—riggers and what not—were most annoyingly slow, but time cured that. It was the crew that troubled me.

"I wished a round score of men—in case of natives, buccaneers, or the odious French—and I had the worry of the deuce to find so much as half a dozen, till the most remarkable stroke of fortune brought me the very man I required. I was standing on the deck, when, by the merest accident, I fell in talk with him. I found he was an old sailor, kept a public house, knew all the seafaring men in Bristol, had lost his health ashore, and wanted a good berth as cook to get to sea again. He had hobbled down there that morning, he said, to get a smell of the salt. I engaged him on the spot to be ship's cook. Long John Silver he is called, and has lost a leg; but that I regarded as a recommendation, since he lost it in his country's service, under the immortal Hawke. He has no pension, Livesey. Imagine the abominable age we live in!

"Well, sir, I thought I had only found a cook, but it was a crew I had discovered. Between Silver and myself we got together in a few days a company of the toughest old salts imaginable—not pretty to look at, but fellows, by their faces, of the most indomitable spirit. I declare we could fight a frigate. Long John even got rid of two out of the six or seven I had already engaged. He showed me in a moment that they were just the sort of fresh-water swabs we had to fear in an adventure of importance.

"I am in the most magnificent health and spirits, yet I shall not

enjoy a moment till I hear my old tarpaulins tramping round the capstan. Seaward ho! Hang the treasure! It's the glory of the sea that has turned my head. So now, Livesey, come post.

"Let young Hawkins go at once to see his mother, with Redruth for a guard, and then both come full speed to Bristol.

"JOHN TRELAWNEY."

"P. S.—I did not tell you that Blandly, who, by the way, is to send a consort after us if we don't turn up by the end of August, had found an admirable fellow for sailing-master—a stiff man, which I regret, but, in all other respects, a treasure. Long John Silver unearthed a very competent man for a mate, a man named Arrow.

"I forgot to tell you that Silver is a man of substance; I know of my own knowledge that he has a banker's account, which has never been overdrawn. J. T.

"P. P. S.—Hawkins may stay one night with his mother.

"J. T."

You can fancy the excitement into which that letter put me. I was half beside myself with glee. The next morning I set out on foot for the Admiral Benbow, and there I found my mother in good health and spirits. The squire had had everything repaired, and had added some furniture—above all, a beautiful arm-chair for mother in the bar. He had found her a boy as an apprentice, also, so that she should not want help while I was gone.

It was on seeing that boy that I understood, for the first time, my situation. I had thought up to that moment of the adventures before me, not at all of the home that I was leaving; and now at sight of this clumsy stranger, who was to stay here in my place beside my mother, I had my first attack of tears. The night passed, and the next day Redruth and I were afoot again. I had said good-by to mother and the cove where I had lived since I was born, and the dear old Admiral Benbow. Next moment we had turned the corner, and my home was out of sight.

The mail pieked us up about dusk at the Royal George on the heath. I was wedged in between Redruth and a stout old gentleman, and in spite of the swift motion and the cold night air, I must have slept like a log up hill and down dale, through stage after stage; for when I was awakened at last, I opened my eyes to find that we were standing before a large building in a eity street. "Where are we?" I asked.—"Bristol," said Tom. "Get down."

Mr. Trelawney had taken up his residenee at an inn far down the docks, to superintend the work upon the sehooner. Thither we had now to walk, and our way, to my great delight, lay along the quays and beside the great multitude of ships of all sizes and rigs and nations. In one, sailors were singing at their work; in another, there were men aloft, high over my head, hanging to threads that seemed no thieker than a spider's. Though I had lived by the shore all my life, I seemed never to have been near the sea till then. And I was going to sea myself; to sea in a schooner, with a piping boatswain, and pig-tailed singing seamen; to sea, bound for an unknown island, and to seek for buried treasure.

While I was in this delightful dream, we eame suddenly in front of a large inn, and met Squire Trelawney, all dressed out like a sea offieer, in stout blue eloth, coming out of the door with a smile on his faee, and a eapital imitation of a sailor's walk. "Here you are!" he cried; "and the doetor came last night from London. Bravo!—the ship's eompany eomplete."—"Oh, sir," eried I, "when do we sail?"—"Sail!" says he. "We sail to-morrow."

CHAPTER VIII

AT THE SIGN OF THE SPY-GLASS

When I had done breakfasting, the squire gave me a note addressed to John Silver, at the sign of the Spy-glass, and told me I should easily find the place by following the line of the docks, and keeping a lookout for a little tavern with a brass telescope for a sign. I set off, and picked my way among a great crowd of people and carts and bales, until I found the tavern in question.

It was a bright enough little place of entertainment. The sign was newly painted; the windows had neat red curtains; the floor was cleanly sanded. The customers were mostly seafaring men, and they talked so loudly that I hung at the door almost afraid to enter.

As I was waiting, a man came out of a side room, and at a glance I was sure he must be Long John. His left leg was cut off close by the hip, and under the left shoulder he carried a crutch, which he managed with wonderful dexterity, hopping about upon it like a bird. He was very tall and strong, with a face as big as a ham—plain and pale, but intelligent and smiling.

Now, to tell you the truth, from the very first mention of Long John in Squire Trelawney's letter, I had taken a fear in my mind that he might prove to be the very one-legged sailor whom I had watched for so long at the old Benbow. But one look at the man before me was enough. I had seen the captain, and Black Dog, and the blind man Pew, and I thought I knew what a buccaneer was like—a very different creature, according to me, from this clean and pleasant-tempered landlord. I plucked up courage at once, crossed the threshold, and walked right up to the man where he stood, propped on his crutch, talking to a customer. "Mr. Silver, sir?" I asked, holding out the note.—"Yes, my lad," said he; "such is my name, to be sure. And

who may you be?" And when he saw the squire's letter he seemed to me to give something almost like a start.

"Oh!" said he, quite aloud, and offering his hand, "I see. You are our new cabin-boy; pleased I am to see you." And he took my hand in his large, firm grasp.

Just then one of the customers at the far side rose suddenly and made for the door. It was close by him, and he was out in the street in a moment. But his hurry had attracted my notice, and I recognized him at a glance. It was the tallow-faced man, wanting two fingers, who had come first to the Admiral Benbow. "Oh," I cried, "stop him! it's Black Dog!"—"I don't care two coppers who he is," cried Silver, "but he hasn't paid his score. Harry, run and catch him." One of the others who was nearest the door leaped up and started in pursuit.

"If he were Admiral Hawke, he shall pay his score," cried Silver; and then, relinquishing my hand, "Who did you say he was?" he asked. "Black what?"—"Dog, sir," said I. "Has Mr. Trelawney not told you of the buccaneers? He was one of them."—"So?" cried Silver. "In my house! Ben, run and help Harry. One of those swabs, was he? Was that you drinking with him, Morgan? Step up here."

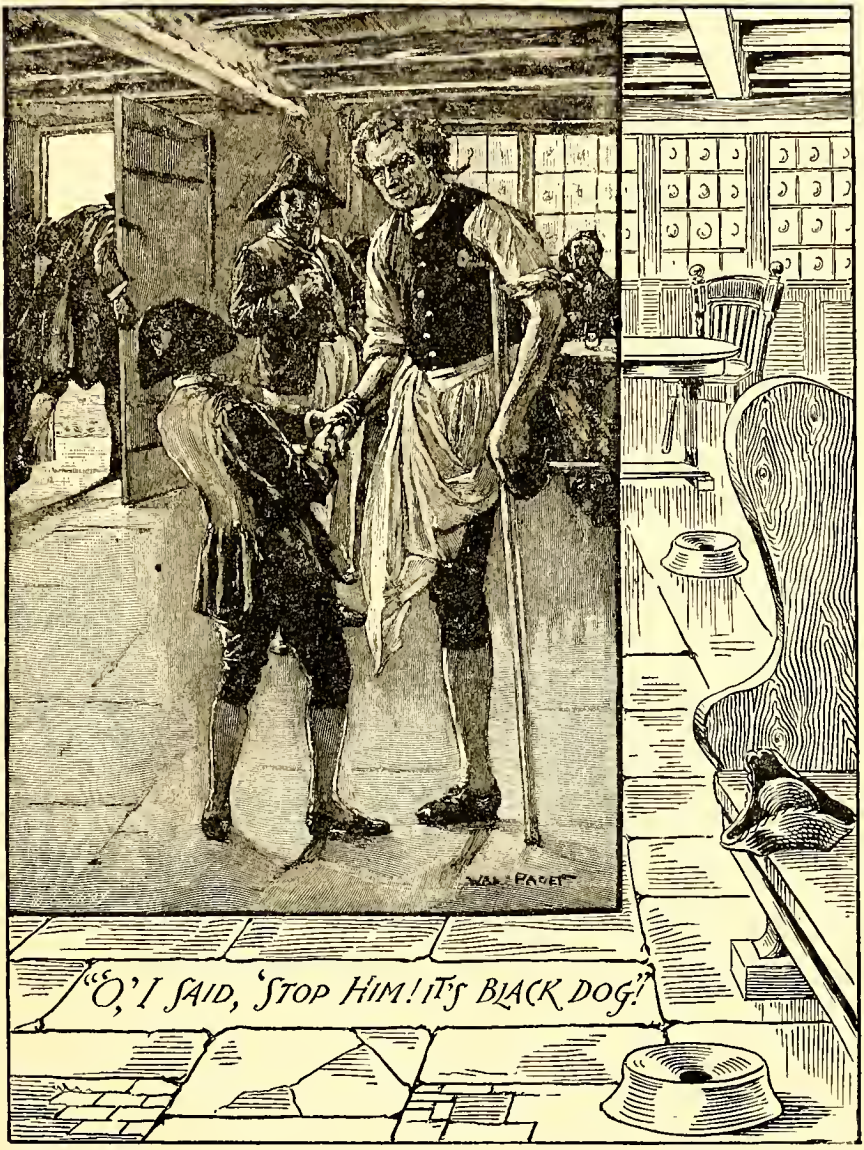
The man whom he called Morgan—an old, gray-haired, mahogany-faced sailor—came forward pretty sheepishly, rolling his quid. "Now, Morgan," said Long John, very sternly, "you never clapped your eyes on that Black—Black Dog before, did you, now?"—"Not I, sir," said Morgan, with a salute.—"You didn't know his name, did you?"—"No, sir."—"By the powers, Tom Morgan, it's good for you!" exclaimed the landlord. "If you had been mixed up with the like of that, you would never have put another foot in my house, you may lay to that. And what was he saying to you?"—"I don't rightly know, sir," answered Morgan.—"Do you call that a head on your shoulders, or a blessed dead-eye?" cried Long John. "Don't rightly know, don't you? Perhaps you don't happen to rightly know who you was speak-

ing to, perhaps? Come now, what was he jawin—v'yages, cap'ns, ships? Pipe up. What was it?"—"We was a-talkin' of keel-hauling," answered Morgan.—"Keel-hauling, was you? and a mighty suitable thing, too, and you may lay to that. Get back to your place for a lubber, Tom."

And then, as Morgan rolled back to his seat, Silver added to me, in a confidential whisper, that was very flattering, as I thought: "He's quite an honest man, Tom Morgan, on'y stupid. And now," he ran on again, aloud, "let's see—Black Dog? No, I don't know the name, not I. Yet I kind of think I've—yes, I've seen the swab. He used to come here with a blind beggar, he used."—"That he did, you may be sure," said I. "I know that blind man, too. His name was Pew."—"It was!" cried Silver, now quite excited. "Pew! That were his name for certain. Ah, he looked a shark, he did! If we run down this Black Dog, now, there'll be news for Cap'n Trelawney! Ben's a good runner. He should run him down. He talked o' keel-hauling, did he? *I'll* keel-haul him!"

All the time he was jerking out these phrases he was stumping up and down the tavern on his crutch, and giving such a show of excitement as would have convinced an Old Bailey judge. My suspicions had been thoroughly re-awakened on finding Black Dog at the Spy-glass, and I watched the cook narrowly. But he was too deep, and too ready, and too clever for me, and by the time the two men had come back out of breath, and confessed that they had lost the track in a crowd, I would have gone bail for the innocence of Long John Silver.

"See here, now, Hawkins," said he, "here's a blessed hard thing on a man like me, now, ain't it? There's Cap'n Trelawney—what's he to think? Here I have this confounded son of a Dutchman sitting in my own house, drinking of my own rum! Now, Hawkins, you do me justice with the cap'n. You're a lad, you are, but you're as smart as paint. I see that when you first came in. Now, here it is: What could I do, with this old timber I hobble on? When I was an A B



Page 37.

master mariner I'd have come up alongside of him, hand over hand, and broached him to in a brace of old shakes, I would; and now——" And then, all of a sudden, he stopped, and his jaw dropped as though he had remembered something. "The score!" he burst out. "Three goes o' rum! Why, shiver my timbers, if I hadn't forgotten my score!" And, falling on a bench, he laughed until the tears ran down his cheeks. I could not help joining, and we laughed together, peal after peal, until the tavern rang again.

"Why, what a precious old sea-calf I am!" he said, at last, wiping his cheeks. "But, come, now, stand by to go about. I'll put on my old cocked hat and step along of you to Cap'n Trelawney, and report this here affair."

On our little walk along the quays he made himself the most interesting companion, telling me about the different ships that we passed by, their rig, tonnage, and nationality, explaining the work that was going forward and every now and then telling me some little anecdote of seamen, or repeating a nautical phrase till I had learned it perfectly. I began to see that here was one of the best of possible shipmates. When we got to the inn, the squire and Doctor Livesey were seated together, finishing a quart of ale with a toast in it, before they should go aboard the schooner on a visit of inspection.

Long John told the story from first to last, with a great deal of spirit and the most perfect truth. "That was how it were, now, weren't it, Hawkins?" he would say, now and again, and I could always bear him entirely out. The two gentlemen regretted that Black Dog had got away, but we all agreed there was nothing to be done, and after he had been complimented, Long John took up his crutch and departed.

"All hands aboard by four this afternoon!" shouted the squire after him.—"Ay, ay, sir," cried the cook in the passage.—"Well, squire," said Doctor Livesey, "I don't put much faith in your discoveries, as a general thing, but I will say this—John Silver suits me."—

"That man's a perfect trump," declared the squire.—"And now," added the doctor, "Jim may come on board with us, may he not?"—"To be sure he may," said the squire. "Take your hat, Hawkins, and we'll see the ship."

CHAPTER IX

POWDER AND ARMS

The Hispaniola lay some way out, and we went under the figure-heads and around the sterns of many other ships. At last we swung alongside, and were met and saluted as we stepped aboard by the mate, Mr. Arrow, a brown old sailor, with earrings in his ears and a squint. He and the squire were very thick and friendly, but I soon observed that things were not the same between Trelawney and the captain.

This last was a sharp-looking man, who seemed angry with everything on board, and was soon to tell us why, for we had hardly got down into the cabin when a sailor followed us.

"Captain Smollett, sir, axing to speak with you," said he.—"I am always at the captain's orders. Show him in," said the squire. The captain, who was close behind his messenger, entered at once, and shut the door behind him. "Well, sir," said the captain, "better speak plain, I believe, at the risk of offense. I don't like this cruise; I don't like the men; and I don't like my officer. That's short and sweet."—"Perhaps, sir, you don't like the ship?" inquired the squire, very angry, as I could see.—"I can't speak as to that, sir, not having seen her tried," said the captain. "She seems a clever craft; more I can't say."—"Possibly, sir, you may not like your employer, either?" said the squire.

But here Doctor Livesey cut in. "Stay a bit," said he, "stay a bit. No use of such questions as that but to produce ill-feeling. The captain has said too much or he has said too little, and I'm bound to say that I require an explanation of his words. You don't, you say, like this cruise. Now, why?"—"I was engaged, sir, on what we call

sealed orders, to sail this ship for that gentleman where he should bid me," said the captain. "So far so good. But now I find that every man before the mast knows more than I do. I don't call that fair, now, do you?"—"No," said Doctor Livesey, "I don't."—"Next," said the captain, "I learn we are going after treasure—hear it from my own hands, mind you. Now, treasure is ticklish work; I don't like treasure voyages on any account; and I don't like them, above all, when they are secret, and when the secret has been told to the parrot. It's my belief neither of you gentlemen know what you are about; but I'll tell you my way of it—life or death, and a close run."

"That is all clear, and, I dare say, true enough," replied Doctor Livesey. "We take the risk, but we are not so ignorant as you believe us. Next, you say you don't like the crew. Are they not good seamen?"—"I don't like them, sir," returned Captain Smollett. "And I think I should have had the choosing of my own hands, if you go to that."—"Perhaps you should," replied the doctor, "but the slight, if there be one, was unintentional. And you don't like Mr. Arrow?"—"I don't, sir. I believe he's a good seaman, but he's too free with the crew to be a good officer. A mate should keep himself to himself."—"Well, now, and the short and long of it, captain?" asked the doctor. "Tell us what you want."—"Well, gentlemen, are you determined to go on this cruise?"—"Like iron," answered the squire.—"Very good," said the captain. "Then, as you've heard me very patiently, saying things that I could not prove, hear me a few words more. They are putting the powder and the arms in the fore-hold. Now, you have a good place under the cabin; why not put them there?—first point. Then you are bringing four of your own people with you, and they tell me some of them are to be berthed forward. Why not give them the berths here beside the cabin?—second point."—"Any more?" asked Trelawney.—"One more," said the captain. "There's been too much blabbing already."—"Far too much," agreed the doctor.—"I'll tell you what I've heard myself," continued Captain Smollett; "that

you have a map of an island; that there's crosses on the map to show where treasure is; and that the island lies——" And then he named the latitude and longitude exactly.—"I never told that," cried the squire, "to a soul."—"The hands know it, sir," returned the captain.—"Livesey, that must have been you or Hawkins," cried the squire.—"It doesn't much matter who it was," replied the doctor. And I could see that neither he nor the captain paid much regard to Trelawney's protestations.—"Well, gentlemen," continued the captain, "I don't know who has this map, but I make it a point it shall be kept secret even from me and Mr. Arrow. Otherwise I would ask you to let me resign."

"I see," said the doctor. "You wish to keep this matter dark, and to make a garrison of the stern part of the ship manned with my friend's own people, and provided with all the arms and powder on board. In other words, you fear a mutiny."—"Sir," said Captain Smollett, "with no intention to take offense, I deny your right to put words into my mouth. No captain, sir, would be justified in going to sea at all if he had ground enough for that. As for Mr. Arrow, I believe him thoroughly honest; some of the men are the same; all may be, for what I know. But I am responsible for the ship's safety and the life of every man Jack aboard of her. I see things going, as I think, not quite right; and I ask you to take certain precautions, or let me resign my berth. And that's all."

"Captain Smollett," began the doctor, with a smile, "when you came in here I'll stake my wig you meant more than this."—"Doctor," said the captain, "you are smart. When I came in here I meant to get discharged. I had no thought that Mr. Trelawney would hear a word."—"No more I would," cried the squire. "Had Livesey not been here I should have seen you to the deuce. As it is, I have heard you. I will do as you desire, but I think the worse of you."—"That's as you please, sir," said the captain. "You'll find I do my duty." And with that he took his leave.

When we came on deck the men had begun already to take out the arms and powder, yo-ho-ing at their work, while the captain and Arrow stood by superintending. The new arrangement was quite to my liking. The whole schooner had been overhauled; six berths had been made astern, out of what had been the afterpart of the main hold, and this set of cabins was only joined to the galley and forecastle by a sparred passage on the port side. It had been originally meant that the captain, Arrow, Hunter, Joyce, the doctor, and the squire were to occupy these six berths. Now, Redruth and I were to get two of them, and Arrow and the captain were to sleep on deck in the companion, which had been enlarged on each side till you might almost have called it a round-house.

We were all hard at work changing the powder and the berths, when the last man or two, and Long John along with them, came off in a shore-boat. The cook came up the side like a monkey for cleverness, and, as soon as he saw what was doing, "So ho, mates!" said he, "what's this!"—"We're a-changing the powder, Jack," answered one. —"Why, by the powers," cried Long John, "if we do, we'll miss the morning tide!"—"My orders!" said the captain, shortly. "You may go below, my man. Hands will want supper."—"Ay, ay, sir," answered the cook; and, touching his forelock, he disappeared at once in the direction of his galley.

"That's a good man, captain," said the doctor.—"Very likely, sir," replied Captain Smollett. "Easy with that, men—easy," he ran on, to the fellows who were shifting the powder; and then suddenly observing me examining the swivel we carried amidships. "Here, you ship's boy," he cried, "out o' that! Off with you to the cook and get some work." And then as I was hurrying off, I heard him say, quite loudly, to the doctor: "I'll have no favorites on my ship." I assure you I was quite of the squire's way of thinking, and hated the captain deeply.

CHAPTER X

THE VOYAGE

All that night we were in a great bustle getting things stowed in their place, and boatfuls of the squire's friends coming off to wish him a good voyage and a safe return, and I was dog-tired when, a little before dawn, the boatswain sounded his pipe, and the crew began to man the capstan-bars. I might have been twice as weary, yet I would not have left the deck, all was so new and interesting to me—the brief commands, the shrill notes of the whistle, the men bustling to their places in the glimmer of the ship's lanterns.

I am not going to relate the voyage in detail. It was fairly prosperous. The ship proved to be a good ship, the crew were capable seamen, and the captain thoroughly understood his business. But before we came the length of Treasure Island, two or three things had happened which require to be known.

Arrow turned out even worse than the captain had feared. He had no command among the men, and people did what they pleased with him. But that was by no means the worst of it; for after a day or two at sea he began to appear on deck with hazy eye, stuttering tongue, and other marks of drunkenness. Sometimes he fell and cut himself. In the meantime we could never make out where he got the drink. Watch him as we pleased, we could do nothing to solve it. He was not only useless as an officer, but had a bad influence among the men, but it was plain that at this rate he must soon kill himself outright, so nobody was much surprised, when one dark night, with a head sea, he disappeared entirely and was seen no more. "Overboard!" said the captain. "Well, gentlemen, that saves the trouble of putting him in irons."

But there we were, without a mate, and it was necessary, of course,

to advance one of the men. The boatswain, Job Anderson, was the likeliest man aboard, and though he kept his old title, he served in a way as mate. Trelawney had followed the sea, and his knowledge made him very useful, for he often took a watch himself in easy weather. And the cockswain, Israel Hands, was a careful, wily, old, experienced seaman, who could be trusted at a pinch with almost anything. He was a great confident of Long John Silver, and so the mention of his name leads me on to speak of our ship's cook, Barbecue, as the men called him.

Aboard ship he carried his crutch by a lanyard round his neck, to have both hands as free as possible. It was something to see him wedge the foot of the crutch against a bulkhead, and, propped against it, yielding to every movement of the ship, get on with his cooking like some one safe ashore. Still more strange was it to see him in the heaviest of weather cross the deck. He had a line or two rigged up to help him across the widest spaces, and he would hand himself from one place to another, as quickly as another man could walk. Yet some of the men who had sailed with him before expressed their pity to see him so reduced. "He's no common man, Barbecue," said the cockswain to me. "He had good schooling in his young days, and can speak like a book when so minded; and brave—a lion's nothing alongside of Long John! I see him grapple four and knock their heads together—him unarmed."

All the crew respected and obeyed him. He had a way of talking to each and doing everybody some particular service. To me he was unweariedly kind, and always glad to see me in the galley, which he kept as clean as a new pin. "Come away, Hawkins," he would say; "come and have a yarn with John. Nobody more welcome than yourself, my son. Sit you down and hear the news. Here's Cap'n Flint—I calls my parrot Cap'n Flint, after the famous buccaneer—here's Cap'n Flint predicting success to our v'yage. Wasn't you, cap'n?" And the parrot would say, with great rapidity: "Pieces of eight! pieces of

eight! pieces of eight!" till you wondered that it was not out of breath or till John threw his handkerchief over the cage.

"Now, that bird," he would say, "is, maybe, two hundred years old, Hawkins—they live forever mostly, and if anybody's seen more wickedness it must be the devil himself. She's sailed with England—the great Cap'n England, the pirate. She's been at Madagascar, and at Malabar, and Surinam, and Providence, and Portobello. She was at the fishing up of the wrecked plate ships. It's there she learned 'Pieces of eight,' and little wonder; three hundred and fifty thousand of 'em, Hawkins! But you smelled powder—didn't you, cap'n?"—"Stand by to go about," the parrot would scream.

"Ah, she's a handsome craft, she is," the cook would say, and give her sugar from his pocket, and then the bird would peck at the bars and swear straight on, passing belief for wickedness. "There," John would add, "you can't touch pitch and not be mucked, lad. Here's this poor old innocent bird of mine swearing blue fire, and none the wiser, you may lay to that." And John would touch his forelock with a solemn way he had, that made me think he was the best of men.

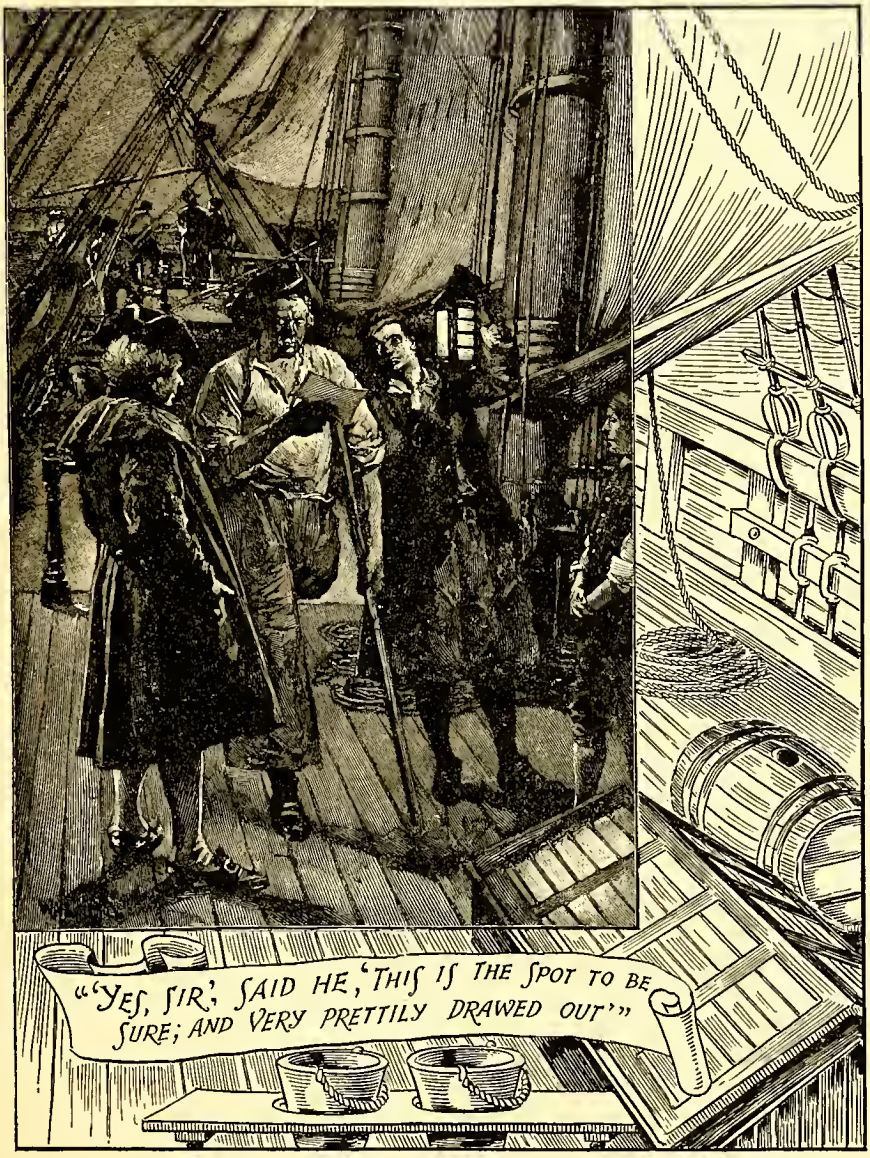
In the meantime, squire and Captain Smollett were still on pretty distant terms with one another. The squire made no bones about the matter; he despised the captain. The captain, on his part, never spoke but when he was spoken to, and then sharp and short and dry, and not a word wasted. He owned, when driven into a corner, that he seemed to have been wrong about the crew, that some of them were as brisk as he wanted to see, and all had behaved fairly well. As for the ship, he had taken a downright fancy to her. "She'll lie a point nearer the wind than a man has a right to expect of his own married wife, sir. But," he would add, "all I say is, we're not home again, and I don't like the cruise."

The squire, at this, would turn away and march up and down the deck, chin in air. "A trifle more of that man," he would say, "and I should explode."

We had some heavy weather, which only proved the qualities of the Hispaniola. Every man on board seemed well content, and they must have been hard to please if they had been otherwise; for it is my belief there was never a ship's company so spoiled since Noah put to sea. Double grog was going on the least excuse; there was duff on odd days, and always a barrel of apples standing broached in the waist, for any one to help himself that had a fancy. "Never knew good to come of it yet," the captain said to Doctor Livesey. "Spoil fok's'le hands, make devils. That's my belief." But good did come of the apple barrel, as you shall hear, for if it had not been for that we should have had no note of warning and might all have perished by the hand of treachery.

This is how it came about. We had run up the trades to get the wind of the island we were after, and now we were running down for it with a bright lookout day and night. It was about the last day of our outward voyage, by the largest computation; some time that night, or, at latest, before noon of the morrow, we should sight the Treasure Island. We were heading south-southwest, and had a steady breeze abeam and a quiet sea. Every one was in the bravest spirits, because we were now so near an end of the first part of our adventure.

Now, just after sundown, when all my work was over and I was on my way to my berth, it occurred to me that I should like an apple. I ran on deck. The watch was all forward looking out for the island. The man at the helm was watching the luff of the sail and whistling away gently to himself. In I got bodily into the apple barrel, and found there was scarce an apple left; but, sitting down there in the dark, what with the sound of the waters and the rocking movement of the ship, I had either fallen asleep, or was on the point of doing so, when a heavy man sat down with rather a clash close by. The barrel shook as he leaned his shoulders against it, and I was just about to jump up when the man began to speak. It was Silver's voice, and, before I had heard a dozen words, I would not have shown myself for


"'YES, SIR,' SAID HE, 'THIS IS THE SPOT TO BE SURE; AND VERY PRETTILY DRAWED OUT'"

Page 56.

all the world, but lay there, trembling in the extreme of fear and curiosity; for from these dozen words I understood that the lives of all the honest men aboard depended upon me alone.

CHAPTER XI

WHAT I HEARD IN THE APPLE BARREL

"No, not I," said Silver. "Flint was cap'n; I was quartermaster, along of my timber leg. The same broadside I lost my leg, old Pew lost his deadlights. That come of changing names to their ships—Royal Fortune, and so on. Now, what a ship was christened, so let her stay, I says. So it was with the Cassandra, as brought us all safe home from Malabar, after England took the Viceroy of the Indies; so it was with the old Walrus, Flint's old ship, as I've seen a-muck with red blood and fit to sink with gold."—"Ah!" cried another voice, that of the youngest hand on board, "he was the flower of the flock, was Flint!"—"Davis was a man, too, by all accounts," said Silver. "I never sailed along of him; first with England, then with Flint, that's my story; and now here on my own account, in a manner of speaking. I laid by nine hundred safe, from England, and two thousand after Flint. That ain't bad for a man before the mast—all safe in bank. 'Tain't earning now; it's saving does it, you may lay to that. Where's all England's men now? I dunno. Where's Flint's? Why, most on 'em aboard here, and glad to get the duff—been begging before that, some on 'em. Old Pew, where is he now? Well, he's dead now and under the hatches; but for two years before that, shiver my timbers! that man was starving. He begged, and he stole, and he cut throats, and starved at that, by the powers!"—"Well, it ain't much use, after all," said the young seaman.—"Tain't much use for fools, you may lay to it—that, nor nothing," cried Silver. "But now, you look here;

you're young, you are, but you're as smart as paint. I see that when I set my eyes on you, and I'll talk to you like a man."

You can imagine how I felt when I heard this abominable old rogue addressing another in the very same words of flattery as he had used to myself. I think, if I had been able, that I would have killed him through the barrel. Meantime he ran on, little supposing he was overheard.

"Here it is about gentlemen of fortune. They lives rough, and they risk swinging, but they eat and drink like fighting-cocks. But that's not the course I lay. I'm fifty, mark you; once back from this cruise I set up gentleman in earnest. Time enough, too, says you. Ah, but I've lived easy in the meantime; never denied myself o' nothing heart desires, and slept soft and eat dainty all my days, but when at sea. And how did I begin? Before the mast, like you!"—"Well," said the other, "but all the other money's gone now, ain't? You daren't show face in Bristol after this."—"Why, where might you suppose it was?" asked Silver, derisively.—"At Bristol, in banks and places," answered his companion.—"It were," said the cook; "it were when we weighed anchor. But my old missis has it all by now. And the Spy-glass is sold, lease and good-will and rigging; and the old girl's off to meet me. I would tell you where, for I trust you; but it 'ud make jealousy among the mates."—"And you can trust your missis?" asked the other.

"Gentlemen of fortune," returned the cook, "usually trust little among themselves, but I have a way with me, I have. There was some that was feared of Pew, and some that was feared of Flint; but Flint his own self was feared of me. They was the roughest crew afloat, was Flint's; the devil himself would have been feared to go to sea with them. Well, now, I tell you, I'm not a boasting man, and you seen yourself how easy I keep company; but when I was quartermaster, *lambs* wasn't the word for Flint's old buccaneers. Ah, you may be sure of yourself in old John's ship."—"Well, I tell you now," replied

the lad, "I didn't half like the job till I had this talk with you, John, but there's my hand on it now."—"And a brave lad you were, and smart, too," answered Silver, shaking hands so heartily that all the barrel shook, "and a finer figurehead for a gentleman of fortune I never clapped my eyes on."

By this time I had begun to understand the meaning of their terms. By a "gentleman of fortune" they plainly meant neither more nor less than a common pirate, and the little scene that I had overheard was the last act in the corruption of one of the honest hands—perhaps of the last one left aboard. But on this point I was soon to be relieved, for Silver, giving a little whistle, a third man strolled up and sat down by the party.

"Dick's square," said Silver.—"Oh, I know'd Dick was square," returned the voice of the cockswain, Israel Hands. "He's no fool, is Dick. But, look here," he went on, "here's what I want to know, Barbecue—how long are we a-going to stand off and on like a blessed bum-boat? I've had a'most enough o' Cap'n Smollett. I want to go into that cabin, I do. I want their pickles and wines, and that."

"Israel," said Silver, "your head ain't much account, nor never was. But here's what I say—you'll berth forward, and you'll speak soft, and you'll keep sober, till I give the word; and you may lay to that, my son."—"Well, I don't say no, do I?" growled the cockswain. "What I say is, when? That's what I say."—"When! by the powers!" cried Silver. "The last moment I can manage; and that's when. Here's a first-rate seaman, Cap'n Smollett, sails the blessed ship for us. Here's this squire and doctor with a map and such—I don't know where it is, do I? No more do you, says you. Well, then, I mean this squire and doctor shall find the stuff, and help us to get it aboard. Then we'll see. If I was sure of you all, I'd have Cap'n Smollett navigate us halfway back again before I struck."

"Why, we're all seamen aboard here, I should think," said the lad Dick.—"We're all fok's'le hands, you mean," snapped Silver. "We

can steer a course, but who's to set one? If I had my way, I'd have Cap'n Smollett work us back into the trades at least. But I know the sort you are. I'll finish with 'em at the island, as soon's the blunt's on board, and a pity it is. But you're never happy till you're drunk. Split my sides, I've a sick heart to sail with the likes of you!"—"Easy all, Long John," cried Israel. "Who's a-crossin' of you?"—"Why, how many tall ships, think ye, now, have I see laid aboard? and how many brisk lads drying in the sun at Execution Dock?" cried Silver; "and all for this same hurry, hurry. You hear me? I seen a thing or two at sea, I have. But you! You'll have your mouthful of rum to-morrow, and go hang."

"Everybody know'd you was a kind of a chapling, John; but there's others as could hand and steer as well as you," said Israel. "They liked a bit o' fun, they did."—"So?" said Silver. "Well, and where are they now? Pew was that sort, and he died a beggar-man. Flint was, and he died of rum at Savannah. Ah, they was a sweet crew, they was! on'y, where are they?"—"But," asked Dick, "when we do lay 'em athwart, what are we to do with 'em, anyhow?"—"There's the man for me!" cried the cook, admiringly. "That's what I call business. Well, what would you think? Put 'em ashore like maroons? That would have been England's way. Or cut 'em down like that much pork? That would have been Flint's or Billy Bones'."—"Billy was the man for that," said Israel. " 'Dead men don't bite,' says he." —"Right you are," said Silver, "dooty is dooty, mates. I give my vote death. When I'm in Parlyment, and riding in my coach, I don't want none of these sea-lawyers in the cabin a-coming home, unlooked for. Wait is what I say; but when the time comes, why, let her rip!" —"John," cried the cockswain, "you're a man!"—"You'll say so, Israel, when you see," said Silver. "Only one thing I claim—I claim Trelawney. I'll wring his calf's head off his body with these hands. Dick!" he added, breaking off, "you must jump up, like a sweet lad, and get me an apple, to wet my pipe like."

You may fancy the terror I was in! I should have leaped out and run for it, if I had found the strength; but my limbs and heart alike misgave me. I heard Dick begin to rise, and then some one seemingly stopped him, and the voice of Hands exclaimed: "Oh, stow that! Let's have a go of the rum."—"Dick," said Silver, "I trust you. I've a gauge on the keg, mind. There's the key; you fill a pannikin and bring it up." Terrified as I was, I could not help thinking to myself that this must have been how Arrow got the strong waters that destroyed him.

Dick was gone but a little while, and during his absence Israel spoke straight on in the cook's ear. It was but a word or two that I could catch, and yet I gathered some important news; for, besides other scraps that tended to the same purpose, this whole clause was audible: "Not another man of them'll jinc." Hence there were still faithful men on board.

When Dick returned, one after another of the trio took the pannikin and drank—one "To luck"; another with a "Here's to old Flint," and Silver himself saying, in a kind of song, "Here's to ourselves, and hold your luff, plenty of prizes and plenty of duff." Just then a sort of brightness fell upon me in the barrel, and, looking up, I found the moon had risen, and almost at the same time the voice on the lookout shouted, "Land ho!"

CHAPTER XII

COUNCIL OF WAR

There was a great rush of feet across the deck. I could hear people tumbling up from the eabin and the fok's'le; and, slipping in an instant outside my barrel, I dived behind the foresail, and came out upon the open deek in time to join Hunter and Doetor Livesey in the rush for the weather bow. Away to the southwest of us we saw two low hills, about a couple of miles apart, and rising behind one of them a third and higher hill, whose peak was still buried in the fog. So mueh I saw almost in a dream, for I had not yet recovered from my horrid fear. And then I heard the voice of Captain Smollett issuing orders. The Hispaniola was laid a eouple of points nearer the wind, and now sailed a course that would just elear the island on the east.

"And now, men," said the eaptain, when all was sheeted home, "has any one of you ever seen that land ahead?"—"I have, sir," said Silver. "I've watered there with a trader I was eook in."—"The anchorage is on the south, behind an islet, I fancy?" asked the captain. —"Yes, sir, Skeleton Island they calls it. It were a main place for pirates once, and a hand we had on board knowed all their names for it. That hill to the nor'ard they calls the Foremast Hill; there are three hills in a row running south'ard—fore, main, and mizzen, sir. But the main—that's the big 'un, with the cloud on it—they usually ealls the Spy-glass, by reason of a lookout they kept when they was in the anchorage cleaning."—"I have a chart here," said Captain Smollett. "See if that's the plaee."

Long John's eyes burned in his head as he took the chart, but, by the fresh look of the paper, I knew he was doomed to disappointment. This was not the map we found in Billy Bones' chest, but an accurate copy, eomplete in all things—names, and heights, and soundings—with

the single exception of the red crosses and the written notes. Sharp as must have been his annoyance, Silver had the strength of mind to hide it.

"Yes, sir," said he, "this is the spot, to be sure, and very prettily drawed out. Who might have done that, I wonder? The pirates were too ignorant, I reckon. Ay, here it is; 'Captain Kidd's anchorage'—just the name my shipmate called it. There's a strong current runs along the south, and then away nor'ard up the west coast."—"Thank you, my man," said Captain Smollett. "I'll ask you, later on, to give us a help. You may go."

I was surprised at the coolness with which John avowed his knowledge of the island, and I own I was half-frightened when I saw him drawing nearer to myself.

Captain Smollett, the squire, and Doctor Livesey were talking together on the quarter-deck, and anxious as I was to tell them my story, I dared not interrupt them openly. While I was still casting about in my thoughts to find some probable excuse. Doctor Livesey called me to his side. He had left his pipe below, and had meant that I should fetch it; but as soon as I was near enough to speak and not be overheard, I broke out immediately: "Doctor, let me speak. Get the captain and squire down into the cabin, and then make some pretense to send for me. I have terrible news." The doctor changed countenance a little, but next moment he was master of himself. "Thank you, Jim," said he, quite loudly; "that was all I wanted to know," as if he had asked me a question. And with that he turned on his heel and rejoined the other two. They spoke together for a little, and though none of them started, or raised his voice, or so much as whistled, it was plain enough that Doctor Livesey had communicated my request, for the next thing that I heard was the captain giving an order to Job Anderson, and all hands were piped on deck.

"My lads," said Captain Smollett, "I've a word to say to you. This land that we have sighted is the place we have been sailing to.

Mr. Trelawney, being a very open-handed gentleman, as we all know, has just asked me a word or two, and as I was able to tell him that every man on board had done his duty, as I never ask to see it done better, why, he and I and the doctor are going below to drink your health and luck, and you'll have grog served out for you to drink *our* health and luck. I think it handsome. And if you think as I do, you'll give a good sea-cheer for the gentleman that does it." The cheer followed—that was a matter of course—but it rang out so full and hearty, that I confess I could hardly believe these same men were plotting for our blood.—"One more cheer for Cap'n Smollett!" cried Long John, when the first had subsided. And this also was given with a will. On the top of that the three gentlemen went below, and not long after word was sent forward that Jim Hawkins was wanted in the cabin.

I found them all three seated round the table, a bottle of Spanish wine and some raisins before them, and the doctor smoking away, with his wig on his lap, and that, I knew, was a sign that he was agitated. "Now, Hawkins," said the squire, "you have something to say. Speak up." I did as I was bid, and told the whole details of Silver's conversation. Nobody interrupted me till I was done, nor did any one of the three of them make so much as a movement, but they kept their eyes upon my face from first to last.—"Jim," said Doctor Livesey, "take a seat." And they made me sit down at a table beside them, poured me out a glass of wine, and all three drank my good health for my luck and courage.

"Now, captain," said the squire, "you were right and I was wrong. I own myself an ass, and I await your orders."—"No more an ass than I, sir," returned the captain. "I never heard of a crew that meant to mutiny but what showed signs before. But this crew beats me."—"Captain," said the doctor, "with your permission, that's Silver. A very remarkable man."—"He'd look remarkably well from a yard-arm, sir," returned the captain. "But this is talk; this don't lead to

anything. I see three or four points, and with Mr. Trelawney's permission I'll name them."—"You, sir, are the captain. It is for you to speak," said Trelawney.

"First point," began Smollett, "we must go on because we can't turn back. If I give the word to turn about they would rise at once. Second point, we have time before us—at least until this treasure's found. Third point, there are faithful hands. Now, sir, it's got to come to blows sooner or later, and what I propose is to take time by the forelock, and come to blows some fine day when they least expect it. We can count, I take it, on your own home servants, Mr. Trelawney?"—"As upon myself," declared the squire.—"Three," reckoned the captain; "ourselves make seven, counting Hawkins here. Now about the honest hands?"—"Most likely Trelawney's own men," said the doctor; "those he picked up himself before he lit on Silver."—"Nay," replied the squire, "Hands was one of mine."—"I did think I could have trusted Hands," added the captain.—"And to think that they're all Englishmen!" broke out the squire.

"Well, gentlemen," said the captain, "we must lay to, if you please, and keep a bright lookout. It's trying on a man, I know. It would be pleasanter to come to blows. But there's no help for it till we know our men. Lay to and whistle for a wind; that's my view."—"Jim here," said the doctor, "can help us more than any one. The men are not shy with him, and Jim is a noticing lad."—"Hawkins, I put prodigious faith in you," added the squire. I began to feel pretty desperate at this, for I felt altogether helpless; and yet, by an odd train of circumstances, it was indeed through me that safety came. In the meantime, talk as we pleased, there were only seven out of the twenty-six on whom we knew we could rely, and out of these seven one was a boy, so that the grown men on our side were six to their nineteen.

CHAPTER XIII

HOW I BEGAN MY SHORE ADVENTURE

The appearance of the island when I came on deck next morning was altogether changed. We were lying becalmed about half a mile to the southeast of the low eastern coast. Gray-colored woods covered a large part of the surface, broken up by streaks of yellow sandbreak in the lower lands, but the general coloring was uniform and sad. The hills ran up clear above the vegetation in spires of naked rock. The Spy-glass, which was by three or four hundred feet the tallest on the island, was the strangest in configuration, running up sheer from almost every side and then suddenly cut off at the top like a pedestal to put a statue on.

The Hispaniola was rolling scuppers under in the ocean swell. I had to cling tight to the backstay and the world turned giddily before my eyes, for though I was a good enough sailor when there was way on, this standing still and being rolled about like a bottle was a thing I never learned to stand without a qualm. We had a dreary morning's work before us, for there was no sign of any wind and the boats had to be got out and the ship warped round the corner of the island and up the narrow passage to the haven behind Skeleton Island. I volunteered for one of the boats, where I had of course no business. The heat was sweltering and the men grumbled fiercely over their work. Anderson was in command of my boat, and instead of keeping the crew in order he grumbled as loud as the worst. "Well," he said, with an oath, "it's not forever." I thought this was a very bad sign, for, up to that day, the men had gone briskly and willingly about their business, but the very sight of the island had relaxed the cords of discipline.

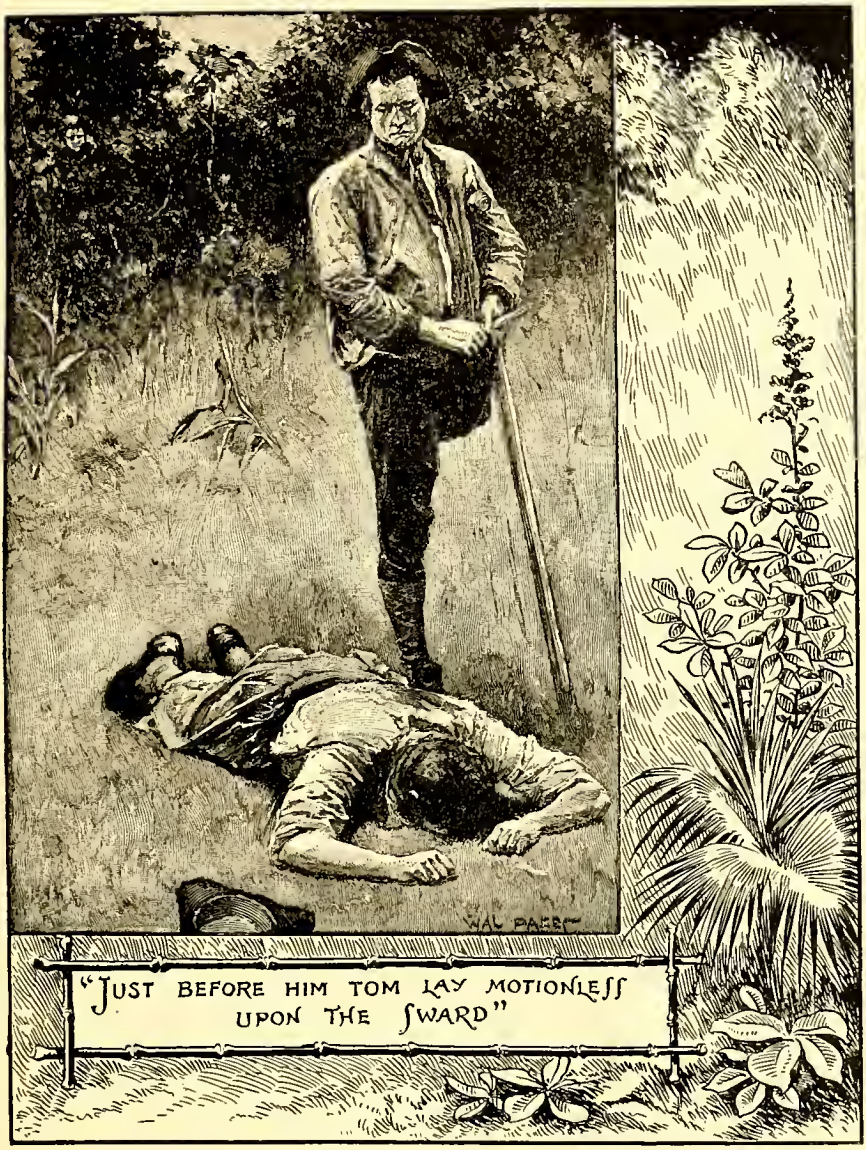
All the way in, Long John stood by the steersman and conned the ship. He knew the passage like the palm of his hand. We brought

up just where the anchor was in the chart, about a third of a mile from either shore, the mainland on one side and Skeleton Island on the other.

The place was entirely land-locked, buried in woods, the trees coming right down to high-water mark, the shores mostly flat, and the hill-tops standing round at a distance in a sort of amphitheater, one here, one there. Two little rivers, or rather two swamps, emptied out into this pond, as you might call it; and the foliage round that part of the shore had a kind of poisonous brightness. From the ship we could see nothing of the house or stockade, for they were quite buried among trees. There was not a breath of air moving, nor a sound but that of the surf booming half a mile away along the beaches and against the rocks outside. A peculiar stagnant smell hung over the anchorage—a smell of sodden leaves and rotten tree-trunks. I observed the doctor sniffing and sniffing, like some one tasting a bad egg. "I don't know about treasure," he said, "but I'll stake my wig there's fever here."

If the conduct of the men had been alarming in the boat, it became truly threatening when they had come aboard. The slightest order was received with a black look. Even the honest hands must have caught the infection, for there was not one man aboard to mend another. Mutiny, it was plain, hung over us like a thundercloud. And it was not only we of the cabin party who perceived the danger. Long John was hard at work going from group to group, spending himself in good advice. He fairly outstripped himself in willingness and civility; he was all smiles to every one. If an order were given, John would be on his crutch in an instant, with the cheeriest "Ay, ay, sir!" in the world; and when there was nothing else to do, he kept up one song after another, as if to conceal the discontent of the rest. Of all the gloomy features of that gloomy afternoon, this obvious anxiety on the part of Long John appeared the worst.

We held a council in the cabin. "Sir," said the captain, "if I risk another order, the whole ship'll come about our ears by the run. You



Page 66.

see, sir, here it is. I get a rough answer, do I not? Well, if I speak back, pikes will be going in two shakes; if I don't, Silver will see there's something under that, and the game's up. Now, we've only one man to rely on."—"And who is that?" asked the squire.—"Silver, sir," returned the captain; "he's as anxious as you and I to smother things up. This is a tiff; he'd soon talk 'em out of it if he had the chance, and what I propose to do is to give him the chance. Let's allow the men an afternoon ashore. You mark my words, sir, Silver'll bring 'em aboard again as mild as lambs."

It was so decided; loaded pistols were served out to all the sure men. Hunter, Joyce, and Redruth were taken into our confidence, and received the news with less surprise and a better spirit than we had looked for, and then the captain went on deck and addressed the crew. "My lads," said he, "we've had a hot day, and are all tired. A turn ashore'll hurt nobody; the boats are still in the water; you can take the gigs, and as many as please can go ashore for the afternoon. I'll fire a gun half an hour before sun-down." I believe the silly fellows must have thought they would break their shins over the treasure as soon as they were landed; for they all came out of their sulks in a moment, and gave a cheer that started the echo in a far-away hill.

The captain was too bright to be in the way. He whipped out of sight in a moment, leaving Silver to arrange the party, and I fancy it was well he did so. Had he been on deck he could no longer so much as have pretended not to understand the situation. It was as plain as day. Silver was the captain, and a mighty rebellious crew he had of it. At last, however, the party was made up. Six fellows were to stay on board, and the remaining thirteen, including Silver, began to embark.

Then it was that there came into my head the first of the mad notions that contributed so much to save our lives. If six men were left by Silver, it was plain our party could not take and fight the ship; and since only six were left, it was equally plain that the cabin party

had no present need of my assistance. It occurred to me at once to go ashore. In a jiffy I had slipped over the side and curled up in the foresheets of the nearest boat, and almost at the same moment she shoved off. No one took notice of me, only the bow oar saying, "Is that you, Jim? Keep your head down." But Silver, from the other boat, looked sharply over and called out to know if that were me; and from that moment I began to regret what I had done.

The crews raced for the beach, but the boat I was in, having some start, and being at once the lighter and the better manned, shot far ahead, and the bow had struck among the shore-side trees, and I had caught a branch and swung myself out, and plunged into the nearest thicket, while Silver and the rest were still a hundred yards behind. "Jim, Jim!" I heard him shouting. But you may suppose I paid no heed; jumping, ducking, and breaking through, I ran straight before my nose, till I could run no longer.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FIRST BLOW

I was so pleased at having given the slip to Long John, that I began to enjoy myself and look around me with some interest on the strange land that I was in. Here and there were flowering plants, unknown to me; here and there I saw snakes, and one raised his head from a ledge of rock and hissed at me with a noise not unlike the spinning of a top. Then I came to a long thicket of oak-like trees, which stretched down from the top of one of the sandy knolls, until it reached the margin of the broad, reedy fen. The marsh was steaming in the strong sun, and the outline of the Spy-glass trembled through the haze.

All at once there began to go a sort of bustle among the bulrushes;

a wild duck flew up with a quack, and soon over the whole surface of the marsh a great cloud of birds hung screaming in the air. I judged at once that some of my shipmates were drawing near; nor was I deceived, for soon I heard the distant tones of a human voice, which grew steadily louder and nearer. This put me in great fear, and I crawled under cover of the nearest live-oak, and squatted there, hearkening, as silent as a mouse. Another voice answered; and the first voice, which I now recognized to be Silver's, once more took up the story, and ran on for a long while in a stream, only now and again interrupted by the other. At last the speakers seemed to have paused, and perhaps to have sat down, for the birds began to settle again to their places in the swamp.

And now I began to feel that I was neglecting my business; that since I had been so foolhardy as to come ashore with these desperadoes, the least I could do was to overhear them at their councils. Crawling on all fours, I made steadily but slowly toward them, till at last, raising my head to an aperture among the leaves, I could see clear down into a little green dell beside the marsh, and closely set about with trees, where Long John Silver and another of the crew stood face to face in conversation.

The sun beat full upon them. Silver had thrown his hat beside him on the ground, and his great, smooth, blond face was lifted to the other man's in a kind of appeal. "Mate," he was saying, "it's because I thinks gold-dust of you—gold-dust, and you may lay to that! If I hadn't took to you like pitch, do you think I'd have been here a-warning of you? All's up—you can't make nor mend; it's to save your neck that I'm a-speaking, and if one of the wild 'uns knew it, where 'ud I be, Tom?"—"Silver," said the other man—and I observed he was not only red in the face, but spoke as hoarse as a crow, and his voice shook, too, like a taut rope—"Silver," says he, "you're honest, or has the name for it; and you've money, too, and you're brave, or I'm mistook. And will you tell me you'll let yourself be led away with

that kind of a mess of swabs? Not you! As sure as God sees me, I'd sooner lose my hand. If I turn again my dooty——"

And then all of a sudden he was interrupted by a noise. I had found one of the honest hands—well, here, at that same moment, came news of another. Far away out in the marsh there arose, all of a sudden, a sound like the cry of anger, then another on the back of it, and then one horrid, long-drawn scream.

Tom had leaped to the sound, like a horse at the spur; but Silver had not winked an eye. He stood where he was, resting lightly on his crutch, watching his companion like a snake about to spring. "John!" said the sailor, stretching out his hand.—"Hands off!" cried Silver, leaping back a yard, as it seemed to me, with the speed and security of a trained gymnast.—"Hands off, if you like, John Silver," said the other. "It's a black conscience that can make you feared of me. But, in heaven's name, tell me what was that?"—"That," returned Silver, smiling away, but warier than ever; "that? Oh, I reckon that'll be Alan."—And at this poor Tom flashed out like a hero. "Alan!" he cried. "Then rest his soul for a true seaman! And as for you, John Silver, long you've been a mate of mine, but you're mate of mine no more. If I die like a dog I'll die in my dooty. You've killed Alan, have you? Kill me too, if you can. But I defies you."

And with that this brave fellow turned his back directly on the cook and set off walking for the beach. But he was not destined to go far. With a cry John seized the branch of a tree, whipped the crutch out of his armpit, and sent that uncouth missile hurling through the air. It struck Tom, point foremost, and with stunning violence, right between the shoulders in the middle of his back. He gave a sort of gasp and fell. Whether he was injured much or little, none could ever tell. Like enough to judge from the sound, his back was broken on the spot. But he had no time given him to recover. Silver was on the top of him next moment, and had twice buried his knife up to the hilt in that defenseless body.

I do not know what it rightly is to faint, but I do know that for the next little while the whole world swam away from before me in a whirling mist. When I came again to myself the monster had pulled himself together, his crutch under his arm, his hat upon his head. Just before him Tom lay motionless upon the sward. Everything else was unchanged, the sun still shining mercilessly upon the steaming marsh and the tall pinnacle of the mountain.

But now John put his hand into his pocket, brought out a whistle, and blew upon it several modulated blasts, that rang far across the heated air. I could not tell, of course, the meaning of the signal, but it instantly awoke my fears. More men would be coming. I might be discovered. They had already slain two of the honest people; after Tom and Alan, might not I come next? Instantly I began to extricate myself and crawl back again, with what speed and silence I could manage, to the more open portion of the wood. As I did so I could hear hails coming and going between the old buccaneer and his comrades, and this sound of danger lent me wings. I ran as I never ran before, and as I ran, fear grew upon me, until it turned into a kind of frenzy. Indeed, could any one be more entirely lost than I? When the gun fired, how should I dare to go down to the boats among those fiends, still smoking from their crime? Would not the first of them who saw me wring my neck like a snipe's? It was all over, I thought. Good-by to the Hispaniola, good-by to the squire, the doctor, and the captain. There was nothing left for me but death by starvation, or death by the hands of the mutineers.

All this while I was running, and got into a part of the island where the wild oaks grew more widely apart. Mingled with these were a few scattered pines. The air, too, smelled more freshly than down beside the marsh. And here a fresh alarm brought me to a standstill with a thumping heart.

CHAPTER XV

THE MAN OF THE ISLAND

From the side of the hill, which was here steep and stony, a spout of gravel was dislodged, and fell rattling and bounding through the trees. My eyes turned instinctively in that direction, and I saw a figure leap with great rapidity behind the trunk of a pine. What it was, whether bear, or man, or monkey, I could in no wise tell. But the terror of this new apparition brought me to a stand. I was now, it seemed, cut off upon both sides; behind me the murderers, before me this lurking nondescript. I began to prefer the dangers that I knew to those I knew not, and I turned on my heel, and, looking sharply behind me over my shoulder, began to retrace my steps in the direction of the boats.

Instantly the figure reappeared, and, making a wide circuit, began to head me off. I was tired, but had I been as fresh as when I rose, I could see it was in vain for me to contend in speed with such an adversary. From trunk to trunk the creature flitted like a deer, running man-like on two legs, but unlike any man that I had ever seen, stooping almost double as it ran. Yet a man it was; I could no longer be in doubt about that. I began to recall what I had heard of cannibals. I was within an ace of calling for help. But the mere fact that he was a man had somewhat reassured me, and my fear of Silver began to revive in proportion. I stood still and cast about for some method of escape, and as I was so thinking, the recollection of my pistol flashed into my mind. As soon as I remembered I was not defenseless I set my face resolutely for this man of the island, and walked briskly toward him.

He was concealed by this time behind another tree-trunk, but as soon as I began to move in his direction he reappeared and took a step

to meet me. Then he hesitated, drew back, came forward again, and at last, to my wonder and confusion, threw himself on his knees and held out his clasped hands in supplication. At that I once more stopped. "Who are you?" I asked.—"Ben Gunn," he answered, and his voice sounded hoarse and awkward, like a rusty lock. "I'm poor Ben Gunn, I am; and I haven't spoke with a Christian these three years."

I could now see that he was a white man like myself, and that his features were even pleasing. He was clothed with tatters of old ship's canvas and old sea-cloth, and this extraordinary patchwork was all held together by a system of the most incongruous fastenings, brass buttons, bits of stick, and loops of tarry gaskin. About his waist he wore an old brass-buckled leather belt, which was the one thing solid in his whole accouterment.

"Three years!" I cried. "Were you shipwrecked?"—"Nay, mate," said he, "marooned." I had heard the word and I knew it stood for a horrible kind of punishment common enough among the buccaneers, in which the offender is put ashore with a little powder and shot and left behind on some desolate and distant island. "Marooned three years agone," he continued, "and lived on goats since then, and berries and oysters. Wherever a man is, says I, a man can do for himself. But, mate, my heart is sore for Christian diet. You mightn't happen to have a piece of cheese about you, now! No? Well, many's the long night I've dreamed of cheese—toasted, mostly—and woke up again, and here I were."—"If ever I can get aboard again," said I, "you shall have cheese by the stone."

All this time he had been feeling the stuff of my jacket, smoothing my hands, looking at my boots, and generally, in the intervals of his speech, showing a childish pleasure in the presence of a fellow creature. But at my last words he perked up into a kind of startled slyness. "If ever you get aboard again, says you?" he repeated. "Why, now, who's to hinder you?"—"Not you, I know," was my

reply.—"And right you was," he cried. "Now you—what do you call yourself, mate?"—"Jim," I told him.—"Jim, Jim," says he, quite pleased, apparently. "Well, now, Jim, I've lived that rough you'd be ashamed to a hear of. Now, for instance, you wouldn't think I had had a pious mother—to look at me?" he asked.—"Why, no, not in particular," I answered.

"Ah, well," said he, "but I had—*re*markable pious. And I was a civil, pious boy, and could rattle off my catechism that fast as you couldn't tell one word from another. And here's what it come to, Jim. But it were Providence that put me here. I've thought it all out in this here lonely island and I'm back on piety. You can't catch me tasting rum so much, but just a thimbleful for luck, of course, the first chance I have. I'm bound I'll be good, and I see the way to. And, Jim"—looking all round him and lowering his voice to a whisper—"I'm rich—rich—rich! I says—and I'll tell you what, I'll make a man of you, Jim. Ah, Jim, you'll bless your stars, you will, you was the first that found me!"

And at this there came suddenly a lowering shadow over his face and he tightened his grasp upon my hand and raised a forefinger threateningly before my eyes. "Now, Jim, you tell me true; that ain't Flint's ship?" he asked. At this I had a happy inspiration. I began to believe that I had found an ally, and I answered him at once. "It's not Flint's ship and Flint is dead, but I'll tell you true, as you ask me—there are some of Flint's hands aboard; worse luck for the rest of us."—"Not a man—with—one—leg?" he gasped.—"Silver?" I asked.—"Ah, Silver!" says he, "that were his name."—"He's the cook, and the ringleader, too." He was still holding me by the wrist, and at that he gave it quite a wring.—"If you was sent by Long John," he said, "I'm as good as pork and I know it. But where was you, do you suppose?"

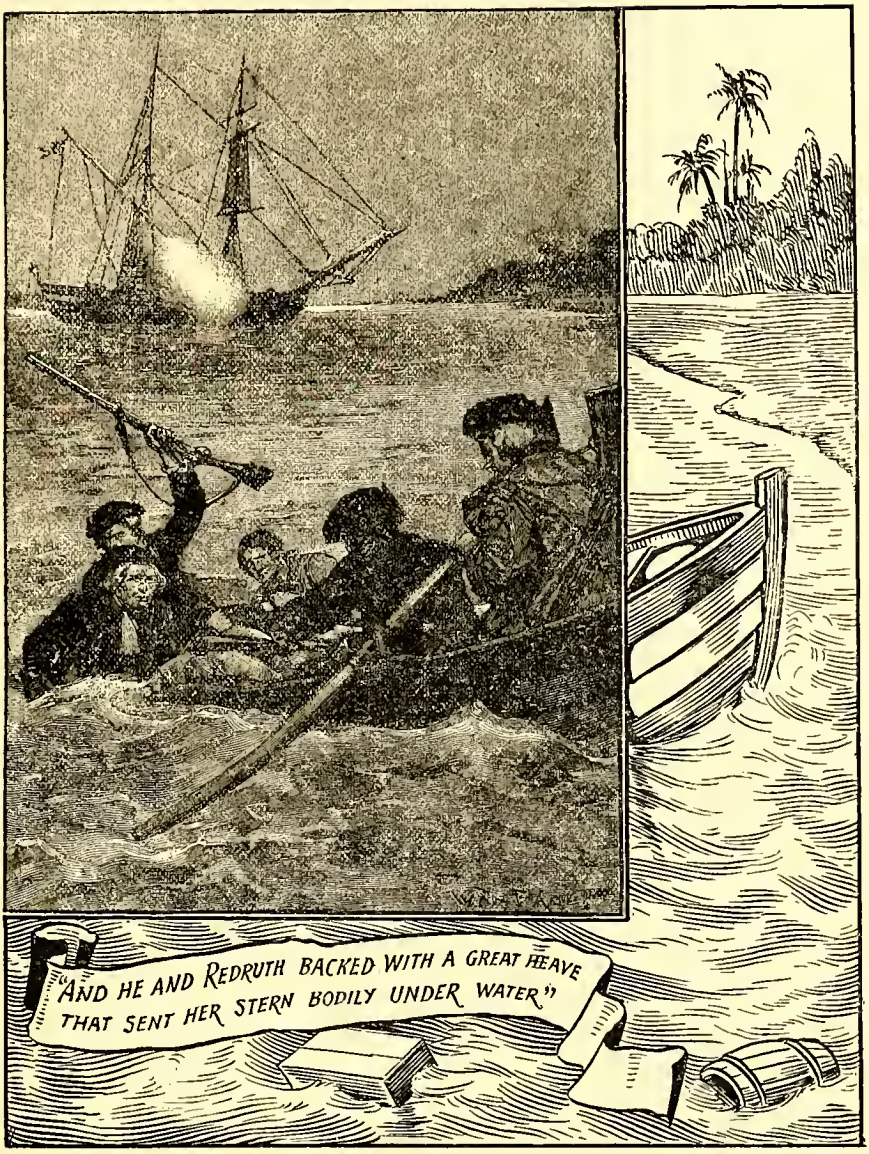
I had made my mind up in a moment, and by way of answer told him the whole story of our voyage and the predicament in which we

found ourselves. He heard me with the keenest interest, and when I had done he patted me on the head. "You're a good lad, Jim," he said, "and you're all in a clove hitch, ain't you? Well, you just put your trust in Ben Gunn—Ben Gunn's the man to do it. Would you think it likely, now, that your squire would prove a liberal-minded one in case of help—him being in a clove hitch, as you remark?" I told him the squire was the most liberal of men.

"Ay, but you see," returned Ben Gunn, "I didn't mean giving me a gate to keep and a suit of livery clothes, and such; that's not my mark, Jim. What I mean is, would he be likely to come down to the tune of, say one thousand pounds out of money that's as good as a man's own already?"—"I am sure he would," said I. "As it was, all hands were to share."—"*And* a passage home?" he added, with a look of great shrewdness.—"Why," I cried, "the squire's a gentleman. And, besides, if we got rid of the others, we should want you to help work the vessel home."—"Ah," said he, "so you would." And he seemed very much relieved.

"Now, I'll tell you what," he went on. "I were in Flint's ship when he buried the treasure. Billy Bones was the mate; Long John, he was quartermaster; and they asked him where the treasure was. 'Ah,' says he, 'you can go ashore, if you like, and stay,' he says; 'but as for the ship, she'll beat up for more, by thunder!' That's what he said.

"Well, I was in another ship three years back, and we sighted this island. 'Boys,' said I, 'here's Flint's treasure; let's land and find it.' The cap'n was displeased at that; but my messmates were all of a mind, and landed. Twelve days they looked for it, and every day they had the worse words for me, until one fine morning all hands went aboard. 'As for you, Benjamin Gunn,' says they, 'here's a musket,' they says, 'and a spade, and pick-ax. You can stay here and find Flint's money for yourself,' they says. Well, Jim, three years have I been here, and not a bite of Christian diet from that day to this. But now,


"AND HE AND REDRUTH BACKED WITH A GREAT HEAVE
THAT SENT HER STERN BODILY UNDER WATER"

Page 79

look you here: look at me. Do I look like a man before the mast? No, says you. Nor I weren't, neither, I says." And with that he winked and pinched me hard. "Hi!" he broke out, "what's that?" For just then, although the sun had still an hour or two to run, all the echoes of the island awoke and bellowed to the thunder of a cannon.

"They have begun to fight!" I cried. "Follow me!" And I began to run toward the anchorage, my terrors all forgotten; while, close at my side, the marooned man in his goatskins, trotted easily and lightly. "Left, left," says he; "keep to your left hand, mate Jim! Under the trees with you! There's where I killed my first goat." The cannon-shot was followed, after a considerable interval, by a volley of small arms. Another pause, and then, not a quarter of a mile in front of me, I beheld the Union Jack flutter in the air above a wood.

CHAPTER XVI

NARRATIVE CONTINUED BY THE DOCTOR—HOW THE SHIP WAS ABANDONED

It was about half-past one—three bells in the sea phrase—that the two boats went ashore from the Hispaniola. The captain, the squire, and I were talking matters over in the cabin. Had there been a breath of wind, we should have fallen on the six mutineers who were left aboard with us, slipped our cable, and away to sea. But the wind was wanting; and, to complete our helplessness, down came Hunter with the news that Jim Hawkins had slipped into a boat and was gone ashore with the rest. We ran on deck. The six scoundrels were sitting grumbling under a sail in the forecastle; ashore we could see the gigs made fast, and a man sitting in each, hard by where the river runs in. One of them was whistling "Lullibullero." Waiting was

a strain, and it was decided that Hunter and I should go ashore with the jolly-boat, in quest of information.

The gigs had leaned to their right, but Hunter and I pulled straight in, in the direction of the stockade upon the chart. The two who were left guarding their boats seemed in a bustle at our appearance; "Lillibullero" stopped off, and I could see the pair discussing what they ought to do. Had they gone and told Silver, all might have turned out differently; but they had their orders, I suppose, and decided to sit quietly where they were and hark back again to "Lillibullero."

There was a slight bend in the coast, and I steered so as to put it between us. Even before we landed we had thus lost sight of the gigs; I jumped out and came as near running as I dared, and I had not gone a hundred yards when I came on the stockade.

This was how it was: A spring of clear water arose at the top of a knoll. Well on the knoll, and inclosing the spring, they had clapped a stout log-house, fit to hold two score people on a pinch, and loop-holed for musketry on every side. All around this they had cleared a wide space, and then the thing was completed by a paling six feet high, without door or opening, too strong to pull down without time and labor, and too open to shelter the besiegers. Short of a complete surprise, they might have held the place against a regiment. What particularly took my fancy was the spring. For, though we had a good enough place of it in the cabin of the Hispaniola, we had no water. I was thinking this over, when there came ringing over the island the cry of a man at the point of death. I was not new to violent death, but I know my pulse went dot and carry one. "Jim Hawkins is gone," was my first thought.

It is something to have been an old soldier, but more still to have been a doctor. And so now I made up my mind instantly, and with no time lost returned to the shore and jumped on board the jolly-boat. By good fortune Hunter pulled a good oar. We made the water

fly, and the boat was soon alongside and I aboard the schooner. I found them all shaken, as was natural. The squire was sitting down, as white as a sheet, thinking of the harm he had led us to, the good soul! and one of the six forecastle hands was little better. "There's a man," said Captain Smollett, nodding toward him, "new to this work. He came nigh-hand fainting, doctor, when he heard the cry. Another touch of the rudder, and that man would join us." I told my plan to the captain, and between us we settled on the details of its accomplishment.

We put old Redruth in the gallery between the cabin and the forecastle, with three or four loaded muskets and a mattress for protection. Hunter brought the boat round under the stern port, and Joyce and I set to work loading her with powder, tins, muskets, bags of biscuit, kegs of pork, a cask of cognac, and my invaluable medicine chest. In the meantime the squire and the captain stayed on deck, and the latter hailed the cookswain, who was the principal man aboard. "Hands," he said, "here are two of us with a brace of pistols each. If any one of you six make a signal of any description, that man's dead." They were a good deal taken aback; and, after a little consultation, one and all tumbled down the fore companion, thinking, no doubt, to take us on the rear. But when they saw Redruth waiting for them in the sparred gallery, they went about ship at once, and a head popped out again on deck. "Down, dog!" cried the captain. And the head popped back again, and we heard no more for the time of these six very faint-hearted seamen.

By this time, tumbling things in as they came, we had the jolly-boat loaded as much as we dared. Joyce and I got out through the stern port, and we made for shore again, as fast as oars could take us. This second trip fairly aroused the watchers along shore. "Lulli-bullero" was dropped again, and just before we lost sight of them behind the little point, one of them whipped ashore and disappeared.

We had soon touched land in the same place as before and set to

provision the block-house. All three made the first journey, heavily laden, and tossed our stores over the palisade. Then, leaving Joyce to guard them, Hunter and I returned to the jolly-boat, and loaded ourselves once more. So we proceeded, without pausing to take breath, till the whole cargo was bestowed, when the two servants took up their position in the block-house, and I, with all my power, sculled back to the Hispaniola. That we should have risked a second boat-load seems more daring than it really was. They had the advantage of numbers, of course, but we had the advantage of arms. Not one of the men ashore had a musket, and before they could get within range for pistol shooting, we flattered ourselves we should be able to give a good account of a half dozen at least.

The squire was waiting for me at the stern window, all his faintness gone from him. He caught the painter and made it fast, and we fell to loading the boat for our very lives. Pork, powder, and biscuit was the cargo, with only a musket and a cutlass apiece for squire and me and Redruth and the captain. The rest of the arms and powder we dropped overboard in two fathoms and a half of water, so that we could see the bright steel shining far below us in the sun on the clean, sandy bottom. By this time the tide was beginning to ebb, and the ship was swinging round to her anchor. Voices were heard faintly halloaing in the direction of the two gigs; and though this reassured us for Joyce and Hunter, who were well to the eastward, it warned our party to be off.

Redruth retreated from his place in the gallery and dropped into the boat, which we then brought round to the ship's counter, to be handier for Captain Smollett. "Now, men," said he, "do you hear me?" There was no answer from the forecastle. "It's to you, Abraham Gray—it's to you I am speaking."

Still no reply. "Gray," resumed Smollett, a little louder, "I am leaving this ship, and I order you to follow your captain. I know you are a good man at bottom, and I dare say not one of the lot of you's

as bad as he makes out. I have my watch here in my hand; I give you thirty seconds to join me in." There was a pause. "Come, my fine fellow," continued the captain, "don't hang so long in stays. I'm risking my life and the lives of these good gentlemen every second." There was a sudden scuffle, a sound of blows, and out burst Abraham Gray with a knife-cut on the side of the cheek, and came running to the captain, like a dog to the whistle.—"I'm with you, sir," said he. And the next moment he and the captain had dropped aboard of us, and we had shoved off and given way. We were clear out of the ship, but not yet ashore in our stockade.

CHAPTER XVII

THE JOLLY-BOAT'S LAST TRIP

This fifth trip was quite different from any of the others. In the first place, the little gallipot of a boat that we were in was gravely overloaded. Five grown men was already more than she was meant to carry. Add to that the powder, pork, and the bread-bags. The gunwale was lipping astern. Several times we shipped a little water, and my breeches and the tails of my coat were all soaking wet before we had gone a hundred yards. The captain made us trim the boat, and we got her to lie a little more evenly. All the same, we were afraid to breathe.

In the second place, the ebb was now making—a strong, rippling current running westward through the basin. "I can not keep her head for the stockade, sir," said I to the captain. I was steering, while he and Redruth, two fresh men, were at the oars. "The tide keeps washing her down. Could you pull a little stronger?"—"Not without swamping the boat," said he. "You must bear up, sir, if you please—bear up until you see you're gaining."

I tried, and found by experiment that the tide kept sweeping us westward until I had laid her head due east, or just about right angles to the way we ought to go. "We'll never get ashore at this rate," said I.—"If it's the only course that we can lie, sir, we must even lie it," returned the captain. "We must keep up stream. You see, sir," he went on, "if once we dropped to leeward of the landing-place, it's hard to say where we should get ashore, besides the chance of being boarded by the gigs; whereas, the way we go the current must slacken, and then we can dodge back along the shore."—"The current's less a'ready, sir," said the man Gray, who was sitting in the fore-sheets; "you can ease her off a bit."—"Thank you, my man," said I, quite as if nothing had happened, for we had all quietly made up our minds to treat him like one of ourselves.

Suddenly the captain spoke up again, and I thought his voice was a little changed. "The gun!" said he.—"I have thought of that," said I, for I made sure he was thinking of a bombardment of the fort. "They could never get the gun ashore, and if they did, they could never haul it through the woods."—"Look astern, doctor," replied the captain.

We had entirely forgotten the long nine; and there, to our horror, were the five rogues busy about her, getting off her jacket, as they called the stout tarpaulin cover under which she sailed. Not only that, but it flashed into my mind at the same moment that the round shot and the powder for the gun had been left behind, and a stroke with an ax would put it all into the possession of the evil ones aboard. "Israel was Flint's gunner," said Gray, hoarsely.

At any risk, we put the boat's head direct for the landing-place. By this time we had got so far out of the run of the current that we kept steerage-way even at our necessarily gentle rate of rowing, and I could keep her steady for the goal. But the worst of it was, that with the course I now held, we turned our broadside instead of our stern to the Hispaniola, and offered a target like a barn door. I could

hear, as well as see, that brandy-faced rascal, Israel Hands, plumping down a round shot on the deck. "Who's the best shot?" asked the captain.—"Mr. Trelawney, out and away," said I.—"Mr. Trelawney, will you please pick me off one of those men, sir? Hands, if possible," said the captain. Trelawney was as cold as steel. He looked to the priming of his gun. "Now," cried the captain, "easy with that gun, sir, or you'll swamp the boat. All hands stand by to trim her when he aims." The squire raised his gun, the rowing ceased, and we leaned over to the other side to keep the balance, and all was so nicely contrived that we did not ship a drop. They had the gun, by this time, slewed around upon the swivel, and Hands, who was at the muzzle, with the rammer, was, in consequence, the most exposed. However, we had no luck; for just as Trelawney fired, down he stooped, the ball whistling over him, and it was one of the other four who fell.

The cry he gave was echoed, not only by his companions on board, but by a great number of voices from the shore, and looking in that direction I saw the other pirates trooping out from among the trees and tumbling into their places in the boats. "Here come the gigs, sir," said I.—"Give way, then," said the captain. "We mustn't mind if we swamp her now. If we can't get ashore, all's up."—"Only one of the gigs is being manned, sir," I added; "the crew of the other is most likely going round by shore to cut us off."—"They'll have a hot run, sir," returned the captain. "It's not them I mind; it's the round shot. Tell us, squire, when you see the match, and we'll hold water."

In the meantime we had been making headway at a good pace for a boat so overloaded, and we had shipped but little water in the process. We were now close in; thirty or forty strokes and we should beach her, for the ebb had already disclosed a narrow belt of sand below the clustering trees. The gig was no longer to be feared. The one source of danger was the gun. "If I dared," said the captain, "I'd stop and pick off another man." But it was plain that they meant

nothing should delay their shot. They had never so much as looked at their fallen comrade.—"Ready!" cried the squire.—"Hold!" cried the captain, quick as an echo. And he and Redruth backed with a great heave that sent her stern bodily under water. The report fell in at the same instant of time. When the ball passed, not one of us precisely knew, but I fancy it must have been over our heads. At any rate, the boat sunk by the stern in three feet of water, leaving the captain and myself, facing each other, on our feet. The other three took complete headers, and came up again, drenched and bubbling.

So far there was no great harm. No lives were lost, and we could wade ashore in safety. But there were all our stores at the bottom, and only two guns out of five remained in a state for service. Mine I had snatched from my knees, and held over my head, by a sort of instinct. As for the captain, he had carried his over his shoulder by a bandoleer, and lock uppermost. The other three had gone down with the boat. To add to our concern, we heard voices already drawing near us in the woods along shore; and we had not only the danger of being cut off from the stockade in our half-crippled state, but the fear before us whether, if Hunter and Joyce were attacked by half a dozen, they would have the sense and conduct to stand firm. With all this in our minds, we waded ashore as fast as we could, leaving behind us the poor jolly-boat, and a good half of all our powder and provisions.

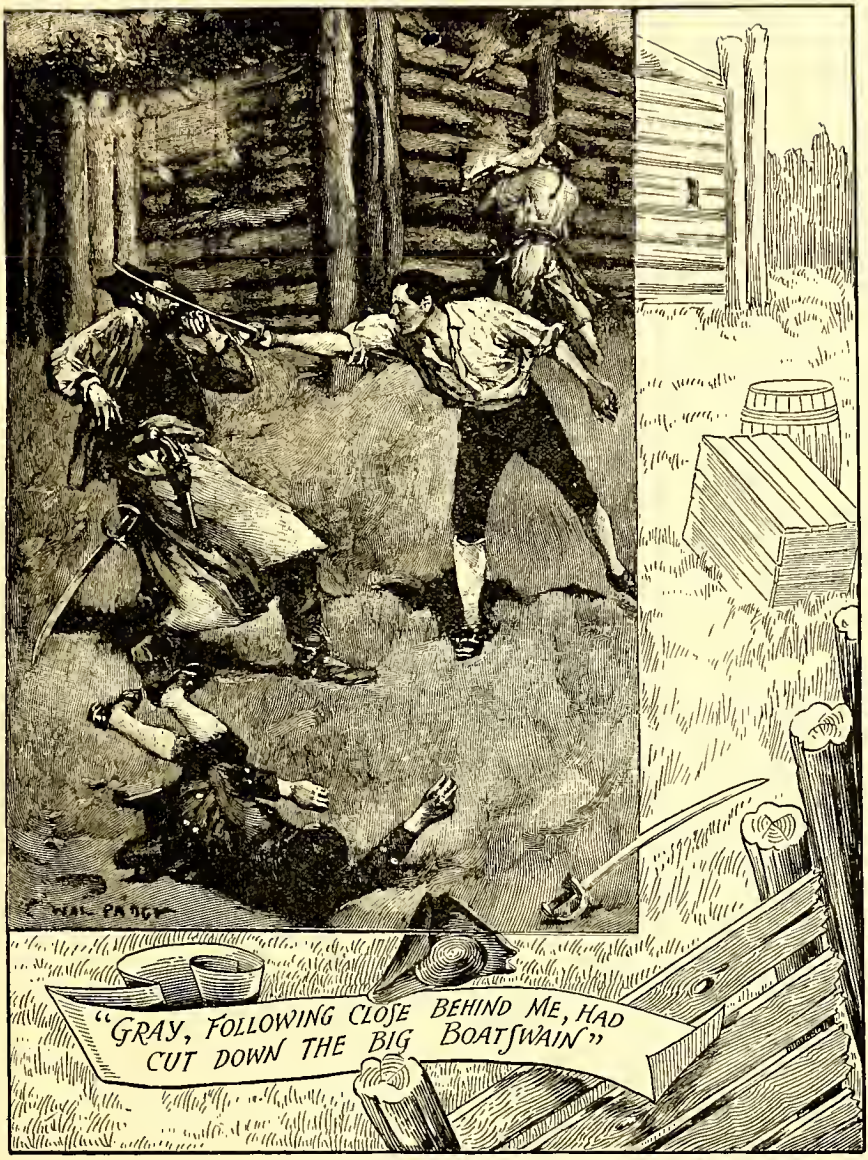
CHAPTER XVIII

END OF THE FIRST DAY'S FIGHTING

We made our best speed across the strip of wood that now divided us from the stockade, and at every step we took the voices of the buccaneers rang nearer. Soon we could hear their footfalls as they ran. I began to see we should have a brush for it in earnest, and looked to my priming. "Captain," said I, "Trelawney is the dead shot. Give him your gun; his own is useless." They exchanged guns, and Trelawney, silent and cool, as he had been since the beginning of the bustle, hung a moment on his heel to see that all was fit for service. At the same time, observing Gray to be unarmed, I handed him my cutlass.

Forty paces farther, we came to the edge of the wood and saw the stockade in front of us. We struck the inclosure about the middle of the south side, and, almost at the same time, seven mutineers—Job Anderson, the boatswain, at their head—appeared in full cry at the southwestern corner. They paused, as if taken aback, and before they recovered, not only the squire and I, but Hunter and Joyce from the block-house, had time to fire. The four shots came in rather a scattering volley, but they did the business; one of the enemy actually fell, and the rest, without hesitation, turned and plunged into the trees. After reloading we walked down the outside of the palisade to see to the fallen enemy. He was stone dead, shot through the heart.

We began to rejoice over our good success, when just at that moment a pistol cracked in the bush, a ball whistled close past my ear, and poor Tom Redruth stumbled and fell his length on the ground. Both the squire and I returned the shot, but as we had nothing to aim at, it is probable we only wasted powder. I believe the readiness of


"GRAY, FOLLOWING CLOSE BEHIND ME, HAD CUT DOWN THE BIG BOATSWAIN"

Page 97.

our return volley had scattered the mutineers once more, for we were suffered without further molestation to get the poor old gamekeeper hoisted over the stockade, and carried into the log-house. Poor fellow! he had not uttered one word of complaint, fear, or even acquiescence, from the very beginning of our troubles till now, when we laid him down in the log-house to die. He had followed every order silently and well; he was the oldest of our party by a score of years; and now it was he that was to die. The squire dropped down beside him on his knees and kissed his hand, crying like a child. "Tom," said the squire, "say you forgive me, won't you?"—"Would that be respectful like, from me to you, squire?" was the answer. "Howsoever, so be it, amen!" After a little while of silence he said he thought somebody might read a prayer. "It's the custom, sir," he added, apologetically. And not long after, without another word, he passed away.

In the meantime the captain, whom I had observed to be wonderfully swollen about the chest and pockets, had turned out a great many various stores—the British colors, a Bible, a coil of stoutish rope, pen, ink, the log-book, and pounds of tobacco. He had found a longish fir-tree lying felled and cleared in the inclosure, and with the help of Hunter, he had set it up at the corner of the log-house where the trunks crossed and made an angle. Then, climbing on the roof, he had with his own hand bent and run up the colors. This seemed mightily to relieve him. He re-entered the log-house and set about counting up the stores, as if nothing else existed. But he had an eye on Tom's passage for all that, and as soon as all was over came forward with another flag and reverently spread it on the body. "Don't you take on, sir," he said, shaking the squire's hand. "All's well with him; no fear for a hand that's been shot down in his duty to captain and owner. It mayn't be good divinity, but it's a fact."

Then he pulled me aside. "Doctor Livesey," he said, "in how many weeks do you and squire expect the consort?"—I told him it was

a question, not of weeks, but of months; that if we were not back by the end of August, Blandly was to send to find us, but neither sooner nor later. "You can calculate for yourself," I said.—"Why, yes," returned the captain, scratching his head, "and making a large allowance, sir, for all the gifts of Providence, I should say we were pretty close-hauled."—"How do you mean?" I asked.—"It's a pity, sir, we lost that second load. That's what I mean," replied the captain. "As for powder and shot, we'll do. But the rations are short, very short—so short, Doctor Livesey, that we're perhaps as well without that extra mouth." And he pointed to the dead body under the flag.

Just then, with a roar and a whistle, a round shot passed high above the roof of the log-house, and plumped far beyond us in the wood. "O-ho!" said the captain. "Blaze away! You've little enough powder already, my lads." At the second trial the aim was better and the ball descended inside the stockade, scattering a cloud of sand, but doing no further damage.—"Captain," said the squire, "the house is quite invisible from the ship. It must be the flag they are aiming at. Would it not be wiser to take it in?"—"Strike my colors!" cried the captain. "No, sir, not I," and as soon as he had said the words I think we all agreed with him. For it was not only a piece of stout, seamanly good feeling; it was good policy besides, and showed our enemies that we despised their cannonade.

All through the evening they kept thundering away. Ball after ball flew over or fell short, or kicked up the sand in the inclosure but they had to fire so high that the shot fell dead and buried itself in the soft sand. "There is one thing good about all this," observed the captain; "the wood in front of us is likely clear. The ebb has made a good while; our stores should be uncovered. Volunteers to go and bring in pork."

Gray and Hunter were the first to come forward. Well armed, they stole out of the stockade, but it proved a useless mission. The mutineers were bolder than we fancied, or they put more trust in

Israel's gunnery, for four or five of them were busy carrying off our stores and wading out with them to one of the gigs that lay close by, pulling an oar or so to hold her steady against the current. Silver was in the stern-sheets in command, and every man of them was now provided with a musket from some secret magazine of their own.

The captain sat down to his log, and here is the beginning of the entry:

"Alexander Smollett, master; David Livesey, ship's doctor; Abraham Gray, carpenter's mate; John Trelawney, owner; John Hunter and Richard Joyce, owner's servants, landsmen—being all that is left faithful of the ship's company—with stores for ten days at short rations, came ashore this day and flew British colors on the log-house in Treasure Island. Thomas Redruth, owner's servant, landsman, shot by the mutineers; James Hawkins, cabin-boy——"

And at the same time I was wondering over poor Jim Hawkins' fate. A hail on the land side. "Somebody hailing us," said Hunter, who was on guard.—"Doctor! squire! captain! Hallo, Hunter, is that you?" came the cries. And I ran to the door in time to see Jim Hawkins, safe and sound, come climbing over the stockade.

CHAPTER XIX

NARRATIVE RESUMED BY JIM HAWKINS—THE GARRISON AT THE STOCKADE

As soon as Ben Gunn saw the colors he came to a halt, stopped me by the arm and sat down. "Now," said he, "there's your friends, sure enough."—"Far more likely it's the mutineers," I answered.—"That!" he cried. "Why, in a place like this, where nobody puts in but gen'lemen of fortune, Silver would fly the Jolly Roger, you don't make no doubt of that. No, that's your friends. There's been blows, too, and I reckon your friends has had the best of it, and here they are

ashore in the old stockade, as was made years ago by Flint. Ah, he was the man to have a head-piece, was Flint! Barring rum, his match was never seen. He were afraid of none, not he; on'y Silver—Silver was that genteel."—"Well," said I, "that may be so, and so be it; all the more reason that I should hurry on and join my friends."—"Nay, mate," returned Ben, "not you. You're a good boy, or I'm mistook; but you're on'y a boy, all told. Now Ben Gunn is fly. Rum wouldn't bring me there, where you're going—not rum wouldn't, till I see your born gen'leman, and gets it on his word of honor. And you won't forget my words.

"And when Ben Gunn is wanted you know where to find him, Jim. Just where you found him to-day. And him that comes is to have a white thing in his hand; and he's to come alone. Oh! and you'll say this: 'Ben Gunn,' says you, 'has reasons of his own.' "—"Well," said I, "I believe I understand. You have something to propose, and you wish to see the squire or the doctor, and you're to be found where I found you. Is that all?"—"And when? says you," he added. "Why from about noon observation to about six bells."—"Good," says I, "and now may I go?"—"You won't forget?" he inquired, anxiously. "Well, then," still holding me, "I reckon you can go, Jim. And, Jim, if you was to see Silver, you wouldn't go for to sell Ben Gunn? And if them pirates came ashore, Jim, what would you say but there'd be widders in the morning?"

Here he was interrupted by a loud report, and a cannon-ball came tearing through the trees and pitched in the sand, not a hundred yards from where we two were talking. The next moment each of us had taken to our heels in a different direction. For a good hour balls kept crashing through the woods, I moved from hiding-place to hiding-place; but toward the end of the bombardment, I had begun to pluck up my heart again; and after a long détour to the east, crept down among the shore-side trees.

The sun had just set, the sea breeze was rustling in the woods,

and ruffling the gray surface of the anchorage; the tide, too, was far out; the air, after the heat of the day, chilled me through my jacket. The Hispaniola still lay where she had anchored; but, sure enough, there was the Jolly Roger—the black flag of piracy—flying from her peak. I lay for some time, watching the bustle which succeeded the attack. Men were demolishing something with axes on the beach near the stockade—the poor jolly-boat, I afterward discovered. Away, near the mouth of the river, a great fire was glowing among the trees, and between that point and the ship one of the gigs kept coming and going, the men shouting at the oars like children. But there was a sound in their voices which suggested rum.

At length I thought I might return toward the stockade. As I rose to my feet, I saw, some distance farther down the spit, and rising from the low bushes, an isolated rock pretty high, and peculiarly white in color. It occurred to me that this might be the white rock of which Ben Gunn had spoken, and that some day or other a boat might be wanted, and I should know where to look for one. Then I skirted among the woods until I had regained the rear of the stockade, and was soon warmly welcomed by the faithful party.

I had soon told my story, and began to look about me. The log-house was made of unsquared trunks of pine—roof, walls, and floor. There was a porch at the door, and under this porch the little spring welled up into an artificial basin—a great ship's kettle of iron, with the bottom knocked out, and sunk "to her bearings," as the captain said, among the sand. Little had been left beside the frame-work of the house, but in one corner there was a stone slab laid down by way of hearth, and an old rusty iron basket to contain the fire.

The slopes of the knoll and all the inside of the stockade had been cleared of timber to build the house, and most of the soil had been washed away or buried in drift after the removal of the trees; only where the streamlet ran down from the kettle a thick bed of moss and some ferns and little creeping bushes were still green among the

sand. The cold evening breeze whistled through every chink of the rude building, and sprinkled the floor with a continual rain of fine sand. There was sand in our eyes, sand in our teeth, sand in our suppers, sand dancing in the spring at the bottom of the kettle, for all the world like porridge beginning to boil. Our chimney was a square hole in the roof; it was but a little part of the smoke that found its way out, and the rest eddied about the house, and kept us coughing and piping the eye.

If we had been allowed to sit idle, we should all have fallen in the blues, but Captain Smollett was never the man for that. All hands were called up before him, and he divided us into watches. The doctor, and Gray, and I, for one; the squire, Hunter, and Joyce upon the other. Tired as we all were, two were sent out for firewood, two more were sent to dig a grave for Redruth, the doctor was named cook, I was put sentry at the door, and the captain himself went from one to another, keeping up our spirits and lending a hand wherever it was wanted. From time to time the doctor came to the door for a little air and to rest his eyes, and whenever he did so, he had a word for me. "That man Smollett," he said once, "is a better man than I am. And when I say that it means a deal, Jim." Another time he came and was silent for a while. Then he put his head on one side, and looked at me. "Is this Ben Gunn a man?" he asked.—"I do not know, sir," said I. "I am not very sure whether he's sane."—"If there's any doubt about the matter, he is," returned the doctor. "A man who has been three years biting his nails on a desert island, Jim, can't expect to appear as sane as you or me. It doesn't lie in human nature. Was it cheese you said he had a fancy for?"—"Yes, sir, cheese," I answered.—"Well, Jim," says he, "just see the good that comes of being dainty in your food. You've seen my snuff-box, haven't you? And you never saw me take snuff; the reason being that in my snuff-box I carry a piece of Parmesan cheese—a cheese made in Italy, very nutritious. Well, that's for Ben Gunn!"

Before supper was eaten we buried old Tom in the sand, and stood round him for a while bareheaded in the breeze. Then, when we had eaten our pork, and each had a good stiff glass of brandy grog, the three chiefs got together in a corner to discuss our prospects. It appears they were at their wits' end what to do, the stores being so low that we must have been starved into surrender long before help came. But our best hope, it was decided, was to kill off the buccaneers until they either hauled down their flag or ran away with the Hispaniola. From nineteen they were already reduced to fifteen, two others were wounded, and one, at least—the man shot beside the gun—severely wounded, if he were not dead. Every time we had a crack at them, we were to take it, saving our own lives, with the extremest care. And, besides that, we had two able allies—rum and the climate.

As for the first, though we were about half a mile away, we could hear them roaring and singing late into the night; and as for the second, the doctor staked his wig that, camped where they were in the marsh, and unprovided with remedies, the half of them would be on their backs before a week. "So," he added, "if we are not all shot down first they'll be glad to be packing in the schooner. It's always a ship, and they can get to buccaneering again, I suppose."—"First ship that I ever lost," said Captain Smollett.

I was dead tired, as you may fancy, and when I got to sleep, which was not till after a great deal of tossing, I slept like a log of wood. The rest had long been up, and had already breakfasted when I was awakened by a bustle and the sound of voices. "Flag of truce!" I heard some one say, and then, immediately after, with a cry of surprise, "Silver himself!" And, at that, up I jumped, and rubbing my eyes, ran to a loop-hole in the wall.

CHAPTER XX

SILVER'S EMBASSY

Sure enough, there were two men just outside the stockade, one of them waving a white cloth; the other, no less a person than Silver himself, standing placidly by.

"Keep indoors, men," said the captain. "Ten to one this is a trick." Then he hailed the buccaneer. "Who goes? Stand, or we fire."—"Flag of truce!" cried Silver. The captain was in the porch, keeping himself carefully out of the way of a treacherous shot, should any be intended. He turned and spoke to us.

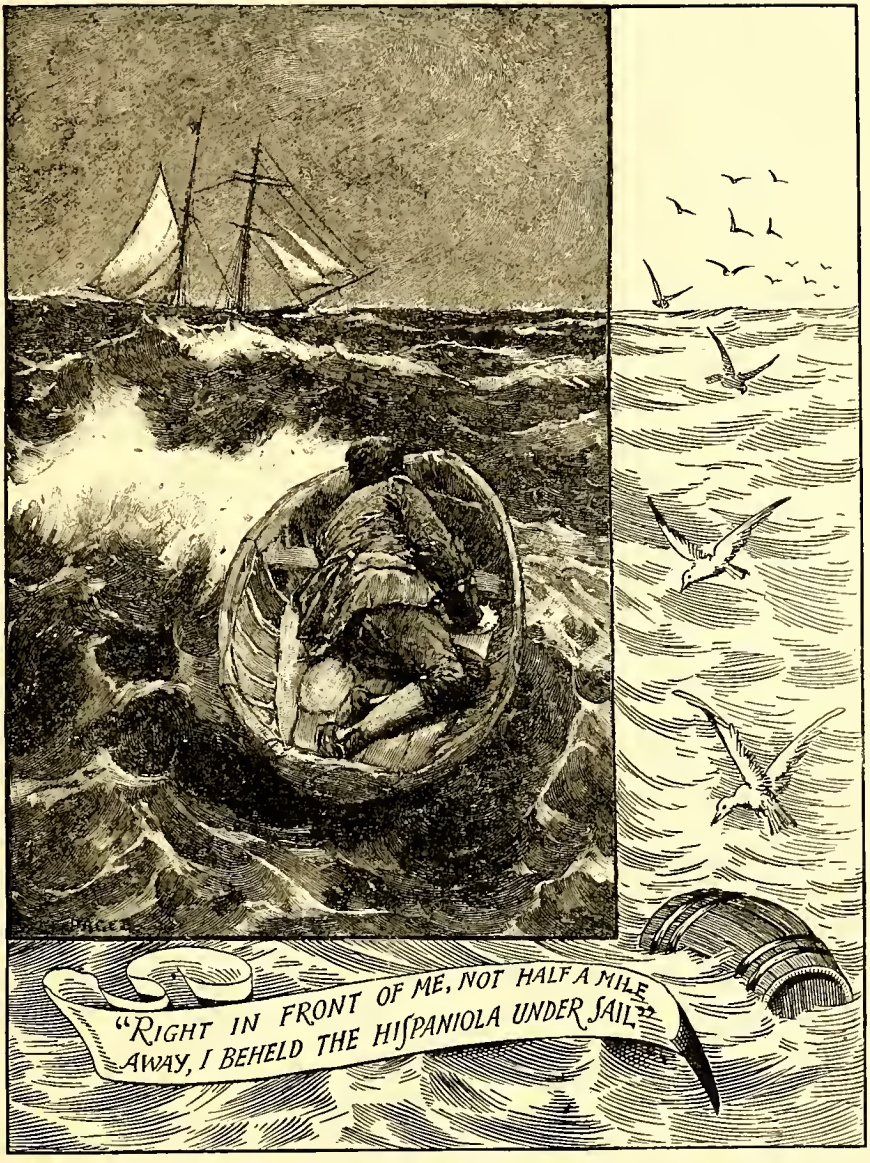
"Doctor's watch on the lookout. Doctor Livesey, take the north side, if you please; Jim the east; Gray, west. The watch below, all hands to load muskets. Lively, men, and careful." And then he turned again to the mutineers. "And what do you want with your flag of truce?" he cried.—This time it was the other man who replied. "Cap'n Silver, sir, to come on board and make terms," he shouted.—"Cap'n Silver! Don't know him. Who's he?" cried the captain. And we could hear him adding to himself: "Cap'n, is it? My heart, and here's promotion!"

Long John answered for himself. "Me, sir. These poor lads have chosen me cap'n, after your desertion, sir"—laying a particular emphasis upon the word "desertion." "We're willing to submit, if we can come to terms, and no bones about it. All I ask is your word, Cap'n Smollett, to let me safe and sound out of this here stockade, and one minute to get out o' shot before a gun is fired."—"My man," said Captain Smollett, "I have not the slightest desire to talk to you. If you wish to talk to me, you can come, that's all. If there's any treachery, it'll be on your side, and the Lord help you."—"That's enough, cap'n," shouted Long John, cheerily. "A word from you's

enough. I know a gentleman, and you may lay to that." Then he advaneed to the stockade, threw over his erutch, got a leg up, and with great vigor and skill succeeded in surmounting the fenee and dropping safely to the other side.

Silver had terrible hard work getting up the knoll. What with the steepness of the incline, the thick tree-stumps, and the soft sand, he and his erutch were as helpless as a ship in stays. But he stuck to it like a man in silenee, and at last arrived before the captain, whom he saluted in the handsomest style. "Here you are, my man," said the eaptain, raising his head. "You had better sit down."—"You ain't a-going to let me inside, eap'n?" eomplained Long John. "It's a main eold morning, to be sure, to sit outside upon the sand."—"Why, Silver," said the eaptain, "if you had pleased to be an honest man you might have been sitting in your galley. It's your own doing. You're either my ship's cook—and then you were treated handsome—or Cap'n Silver, a common mutineer and pirate, and then you can go hang!"

"Well, well, cap'n," returned the sea-cook, sitting down as he was bidden on the sand, "you'll have to give me a hand up again, that's all. A sweet, pretty place you have of it here. Ah, there's Jim! The top of the morning to you, Jim. Doetor, here's my serviee. Why, there you all are together like a happy family, in a manner of speaking."—"If you have anything to say, my man, better say it," said the eaptain.—"Right you are, Cap'n Smollett," replied Silver. "Dooty is dooty, to be sure. Well, now, you look here, that was a good lay of yours last night. I don't deny it was a good lay. Some of you pretty handy with a handspike-end. And I'll not deny neither but what some of my people was shook. But you mark me, cap'n, it won't do twice, by thunder! We'll have to do sentry go, and ease off a point or so on the rum. But I'll tell you I was sober; I was on'y dog tired; and if I'd awoke a seeond sooner I'd a-eaught you at the act, I would. He wasn't dead when I got round to him, *not* he."—"Well?" says Captain Smollett, as cool as can be.


"RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME, NOT HALF A MILE AWAY, I BEHELD THE HISPANIOLA UNDER SAIL."

Page 108.

All that Silver said was a riddle to him, but you would never have guessed it from his tone. As for me, I began to have an inkling. Ben Gunn's last words came back to my mind. I began to suppose that he had paid the buccaneers a visit while they all lay drunk together round their fire, and I reckoned up with glee that we had only fourteen enemies to deal with.

"Well, here it is," said Silver. "We want that treasure, and we'll have it—that's our point! You would just as soon save your lives, I reckon; and that's yours. You have a chart, haven't you?"—"That's as may be," replied the captain.—"Oh, well, you have, I know that," returned Long John. "You needn't be so husky with a man; there ain't a particle of service in that, and you may lay to it. What I mean is, we want your chart. Now, I never meant you no harm, myself."—"That won't do with me, my man," interrupted the captain. "We know exactly what you meant to do, and we don't care; for now, you see, you can't do it." And the captain looked at him calmly, and proceeded to fill a pipe.

"If Abe Gray——" Silver broke out.—"Avast there!" cried Smollett. "Gray told me nothing, and I asked him nothing; and what's more, I would see you and him and this whole island blown clean out of the water into blazes first. So there's my mind for you, my man, on that." This little whiff of temper seemed to cool Silver down.—"Like enough," said he. "I would set no limits to what gentlemen might consider ship-shape, or might not, as the case were. And, seein' as how you are about to take a pipe, cap'n, I'll make so free as to do likewise." And he filled a pipe and lighted it; and the two men sat silently smoking for quite a while, now looking each other in the face, now stopping their tobacco, now leaning forward to spit. It was as good as the play to see them.

"Now," resumed Silver, "here it is. You give us the chart to get the treasure by, and drop shooting poor seamen, and stoving of their heads in while asleep, and we'll offer you a choice. Either you come

aboard along of us, once the treasure shipped, and then I'll give you my affy-davy, upon my word of honor, to clap you somewhere safe ashore. Or, if that ain't to your fancy, then you can stay here, you can. We'll divide stores with you, man for man; and I'll give my affy-davy, as before, to speak the first ship I sight and send 'em here to pick you up. Now you'll own that's talking. And I hope"—raising his voice—"that all hands in this here block-house will overhaul my words, for what is spoke to one is spoke to all."

Captain Smollett rose from his seat and knocked out the ashes of his pipe in the palm of his left hand. "Is that all?" he asked.—"Every last word, by thunder!" answered John. "Refuse that and you've seen the last of me but musket-balls."—"Very good," said the captain. "Now you'll hear me. If you'll come up one by one, unarmed, I'll engage to clap you all in irons, and to take you home to a fair trial in England. If you won't, my name is Alexander Smollett, I've flown my sovereign's colors, and I'll see you all to Davy Jones. You can't find the treasure. You can't sail the ship. You can't fight us—Gray, there, got away from five of you. Your ship's in irons, Master Silver; you're on a lee-shore, and so you'll find. I stand here and tell you so, and they're the last good words you'll get from me; I'll put a bullet in your back when next I meet you. Tramp, my lad. Bundle out of this, double quick."

Silver's face was a picture; his eyes started in his head with wrath. He shook the fire out of his pipe. "Give me a hand up!" he cried.—"Not I," returned the captain.—"Who'll give me a hand up?" he roared. Not a man among us moved. Growling the foulest imprecations, he crawled along the sand till he got hold of the porch and could hoist himself again upon his crutch. And he stumbled off, plowed down the sand, was helped across the stockade by the man with a flag of truce, and disappeared in an instant afterward among the trees.

CHAPTER XXI

THE ATTACK

As soon as Silver disappeared, the captain, who had been closely watching him, turned toward the interior of the house, and found not a man of us at his post but Gray. It was the first time we had ever seen him angry. "Quarters!" he roared. And then, as we all slunk back to our places, "Gray," he said, "I'll put your name in the log; you've stood by your duty like a seaman. Mr. Trelawney, I'm surprised at you, sir. Doctor, I thought you had worn the king's coat!" The doctor's watch were all back at their loop-holes, the rest were busy loading the spare muskets, and every one with a red face.

The captain looked on for a while in silence. Then he spoke. "My lads," he said, "I've given Silver a broadside. I pitched it in red-hot on purpose; and before the hour's out, as he said, we shall be boarded. We're outnumbered, I needn't tell you that, but we fight in shelter; and, a minute ago, I should have said we fought with discipline. I've no manner of doubt that we can drub them, if you choose." Then he went the rounds, and saw, as he said, that all was clear.

On the two short sides of the house, east and west, there were only two loop-holes; on the south side where the porch was, two again; and on the north side, five. There was a round score of muskets for the seven of us; the firewood had been built into four piles—tables, you might say—one about the middle of each side, and on each of these tables some ammunition and four loaded muskets were laid ready to the hand of the defenders. In the middle, the cutlasses lay ranged.

"Toss out the fire," said the captain; "the chill is past, and we mustn't have smoke in our eyes." The iron fire-basket was carried bodily out by Trelawney, and the embers smothered among sand.

"Hawkins hasn't had his breakfast. Hawkins, help yourself, and back to your post to eat it," continued Captain Smollett. "Hunter, serve out a round of brandy to all hands." And while this was going on, the captain completed, in his own mind, the plan of the defense. "Doctor, you will take the door," he resumed. "See and don't expose yourself; keep within, and fire through the porch. Hunter, take the east side, there. Joyce, you stand by the west, my man. Mr. Trelawney, you are the best shot—you and Gray will take this long north side, with the five loop-holes; it's there the danger is. If they can get up to it, and fire in upon us through our own ports, things would begin to look dirty. Hawkins, neither you nor I are much account at the shooting; we'll stand by to load and bear a hand."

An hour passed away. "Hang them!" said the captain. "This is as dull as the doldrums. Gray, whistle for a wind."

Some seconds passed, till suddenly Joyce whipped up his musket and fired. The report had scarcely died away ere it was repeated and repeated from without in a scattering volley, shot behind shot from every side of the inclosure. Several bullets struck the log-house, but not one entered; and, as the smoke cleared away, the woods looked as empty as before.

"Did you hit your man?" asked the captain.—"No, sir," replied Joyce. "I believe not, sir."—"Next best thing to tell the truth," muttered Smollett. "Load his gun, Hawkins. How many should you say there were on your side, doctor?"—"I know precisely," said Doctor Livesey. "Three shots were fired on this side. Two close together—one farther to the west."—"Three!" repeated the captain. "And how many on yours, Mr. Trelawney?" But this was not so easily answered. There had come many from the north—seven, by the squire's computation; eight or nine, according to Gray. From the east and west only a single shot had been fired. It was plain, therefore, that the attack would be developed from the north, and that on the other three sides we were only to be annoyed by a show of hostili-

ties. But Smollet made no change in his arrangements. If the mutineers sueceeded in crossing the stockade, he argued, they would take possession of any unprotected loop-hole, and shoot us down like rats in our own stronghold.

Nor had we much time left to us for thought. Suddenly, with a loud huzza, a little cloud of pirates leaped from the woods on the north side, and ran straight on the stockade. The boarders swarmed over the fence like monkeys. Squire and Gray fired again and yet again; three men fell, one forward into the inclosure, two back on the outside. But of these, one was evidently more frightened than hurt, for he was on his feet again in a crack, and disappeared among the trees. Two had bit the dust, one had fled, four had made good their footing inside our defenses; while from the shelter of the woods seven or eight men, each evidently supplied with several muskets, kept up a hot fire on the log-house.

The four who had boarded made straight before them for the building. In a moment the four pirates had swarmed up the mound and were upon us. The head of Job Anderson, the boatswain, appeared at the middle loop-hole. "At 'em, all hands—all hands!" he roared, in a voice of thunder. At the same moment another pirate grasped Hunter's musket by the muzzle, wrenched it from his hands, plucked it through the loop-hole, and, with one stunning blow, laid the poor fellow senseless on the floor. Meanwhile a third, running unharmed all round the house, appeared suddenly in the doorway, and fell with his cutlass on the doctor.

The log-house was full of smoke, to which we owed our comparative safety. "Out, lads, out! and fight 'em in the open! Cutlasses!" cried the captain. I snatched a cutlass from the pile, and dashed out of the door. Right in front, the doctor was pursuing his assailant down the hill, and, just as my eyes fell upon him, beat down his guard, and sent him sprawling on his back, with a great slash across his face. "Round the house, lads! round the house!" cried the captain,

and even in the hurly-burly I perceived a change in his voice. Mechanically I obeyed, turned eastward, and, with my cutlass raised, ran round the corner of the house. Next moment I was face to face with Anderson. His hanger went up above his head, flashing in the sunlight. I had not time to be afraid, but, as the blow still hung impending, leaped in a trice upon one side, and missing my foot in the soft sand, rolled headlong down the slope.

When I had first sallied from the door, the other mutineers had been already swarming up the palisade to make an end of us. One man, in a red night-cap, with his cutlass in his mouth, had even got upon the top and thrown a leg across. Well, so short had been the interval, that when I found my feet again all was in the same posture, the fellow with the red night-cap still halfway over, another still just showing his head above the top of the stockade. And yet, in this breath of time, the fight was over, and the victory ours. Gray, following close behind us, had cut down the big boatswain ere he had time to recover from his lost blow. Another had been shot at a loop-hole in the very act of firing into the house. A third, as I had seen, the doctor had disposed of at a blow. Of the four who had scaled the palisade, one only remained unaccounted for, and he, having left his cutlass on the field, was now clambering out again with the fear of death upon him.

"Fire—fire from the house!" cried the doctor. "And you, lads, back into cover." But his words were unheeded, no shot was fired, and the last boarder made good his escape. In three seconds nothing remained of the attacking party but the five who had fallen, four on the inside and one on the outside of the palisade. The doctor and Gray and I ran full speed for shelter.

The house was by this time somewhat cleared of smoke, and we saw at a glance the price we had paid for victory. Hunter lay beside his loop-hole, stunned; Joyce, by his, shot through the head, never to move again, while right in the center the squire was supporting the captain, one as pale as the other. "The captain's wounded," said

Trelawney.—"Have they run?" asked Smollett.—"All that could, you may be bound," returned the doctor; "but there's five of them will never run again."—"Five!" cried the captain. "Come, that's better. Five against three leaves us four to nine. That's better odds than we had at starting. We were seven to nineteen then, or thought we were, and that's as bad to bear."

CHAPTER XXII

HOW I BEGAN MY SEA ADVENTURE

There was no return of the mutineers—not so much as another shot out of the woods. They had "got their rations for that day," as the captain put it, and we had the place to ourselves and a quiet time to overhaul the wounded and get dinner. Squire and I cooked outside, in spite of the danger, and even outside we could hardly tell what we were at, for the groans that reached us from the doctor's patients.

Out of the eight men who had fallen in the action only three still breathed, and of these, two were as good as dead; the mutineer, indeed, died under the doctor's knife, and Hunter never recovered consciousness in this world. As for the captain, his wounds were grievous indeed, but not dangerous. Anderson's ball had broken his shoulder-blade and touched the lung, not badly; the second had only torn and displaced some muscles in the calf. He was sure to recover, the doctor said, but in the meantime, and for weeks to come, he must not walk or move his arm, nor so much as speak when he could help it.

After dinner the squire and the doctor sat by the captain's side while in consultation; and when they had talked to their hearts' content, the doctor took up his hat and pistols, girt on a cutlass, put the chart in his pocket, and with a musket over his shoulder, crossed the palisade on the north side and set off briskly through the trees. Gray and I were sitting together at the far end of the block-house, and

Gray took his pipe out of his mouth and fairly forgot to put it baek again, so thunderstruck he was at this oeeurrenee. "Why, in the name of Davy Jones," said he, "is Doetor Livesey mad?"—"Why, no," says I. "He's about the last of this erew for that, I take it."—"Well, shipmate," said Gray, "mad he may not be, but if *he's* not, mark my words, *I* am."—"I take it," replied I, "the doetor has his idea, and if I am right, he's going now to see Ben Gunn."

I was right; but in the meantime, the house being stifling hot, and the little pateh of sand inside the palisade ablaze with midday sun, I began to get another thought into my head. What I began to do was to envy the doetor, walking in the eool shadow of the woods, with the birds about him and the pleasant smell of the pines. All the time I was washing out the bloek-house, and then washing up the things from dinner, this envy kept growing stronger, till at last, being near a bread-bag, and no one then observing me, I took the first step toward my eseapade and filled both poekets of my eoat with biseuit. The next thing I laid hold of was a braee of pistols, and as I already had a powder-horn and bullets, I felt myself well supplied with arms.

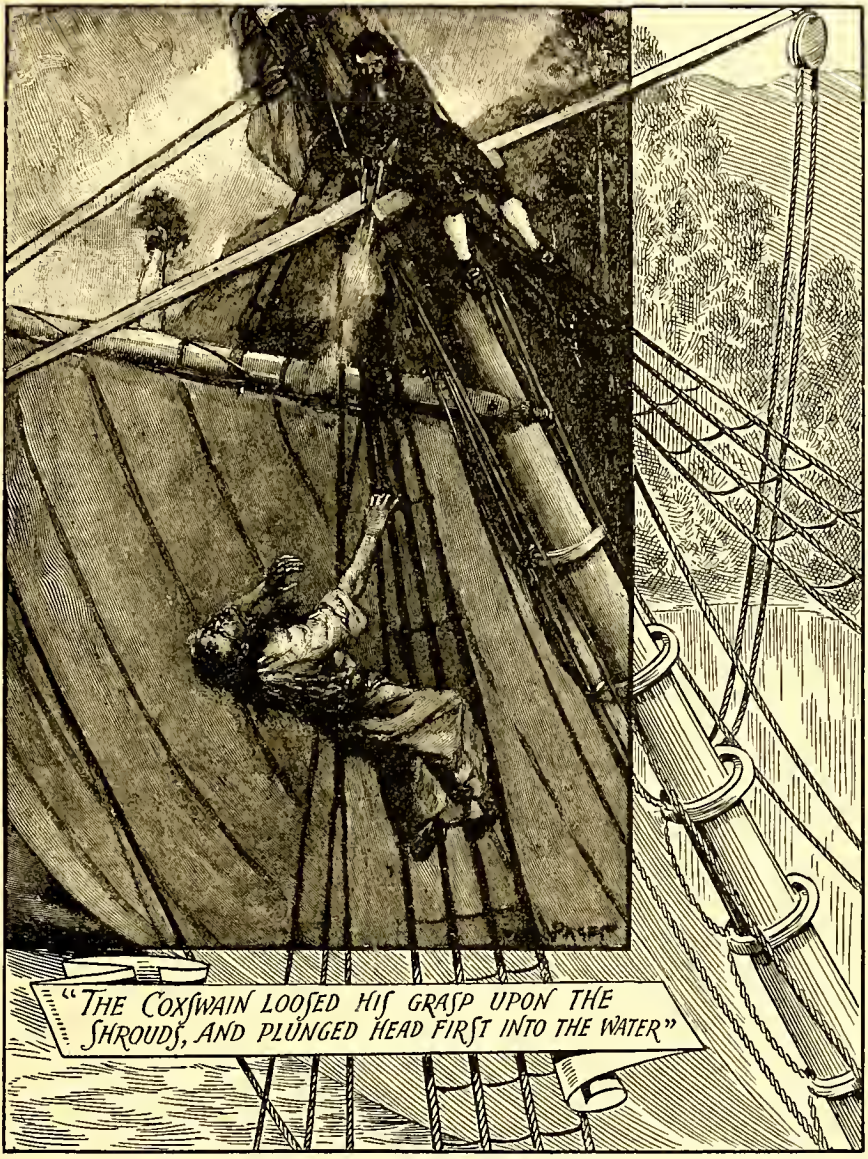
As for the seheme I had in my head, it was not a bad one in itself. It was to go down the sandy pit that divides the anehorage on the east from the open sea, find the white roek I had observed last evening, and aseertain whether it was there or not that Ben Gunn had hidden his boat—a thing quite worth doing, as I still believe. But as I was eertain I should not be allowed to leave the inelosure, my only plan was to take Freneh leave and slip out when nobody was watehing.

Well, as things at last fell out, I found an opportunity. The squire and Gray were busy helping the eaptain with his bandages; the eoast was elear; I made a bolt for it over the stoekade and into the thiekest of the trees, and before my absenee was observed I was out of ery of eompanions. This was my seeond folly, far worse than the first, as I left but two sound men to guard the house; but, like the first, it was a help toward saving all of us.

I took my way straight for the east coast of the island, to avoid all chance of observation from the anchorage. Soon cool draughts of air began to reach me, and a few steps farther I came forth into the open borders of the grove and saw the sea lying blue and sunny to the horizon and the surf tumbling and tossing its foam along the beach. I walked along beside the surf with great enjoyment, till, thinking I was now got far enough to the south, I took the cover of some thick bushes and crept warily up to the ridge of the spit.

Behind me was the sea, in front the anchorage. The sea breeze had been succeeded by light, variable airs from the south and south-east, carrying great banks of fog; and the anchorage, under lee of Skeleton Island, lay still and leaden. The Hispaniola, in that unbroken mirror, was exactly portrayed from the truck to the water-line, the Jolly Roger hanging from her peak. Alongside lay one of the gigs, Silver in the stern-sheets—him I could always recognize—while a couple of men were leaning over the stern bulwarks, one of them with a red cap—the very rogue that I had seen some hours before stride-legs upon the palisade. Soon the gig shoved off and pulled for shore, and the man with the red cap and his comrade went below.

Just about the same time the sun had gone down behind the Spy-glass, and as the fog was collecting rapidly, it began to grow dark in earnest. I saw I must lose no time if I were to find the boat that evening. The white rock, visible enough above the brush, was still some eighth of a mile farther down the spit, and it took me a goodish while to get up with it, crawling, often on all fours, among the scrub. Night had almost come when I laid my hand on its rough sides. Right below it there was an exceedingly small hollow of green turf, hidden by banks and a thick underwood; and in the center of the dell, sure enough, a little tent of goat-skins. I dropped into the hollow, lifted the side of the tent, and there was Ben Gunn's boat—home-made if ever anything was home-made—a rude, lop-sided framework of tough wood, and stretched upon that a covering of goat-skin, with


"THE COXSWAIN LOOSED HIS GRASP UPON THE SHROUDS, AND PLUNGED HEAD FIRST INTO THE WATER"

Page 118

the hair inside. The thing was extremely small, even for me, and I can hardly imagine that it could have floated with a full-sized man. There was one thwart set as low as possible, a kind of stretcher in the bows, and a double paddle for propulsion.

Well, now that I had found the boat, or coracle, I might call it, you would have thought I had had enough of truantry for once; but in the meantime I had taken another notion, and become so obstinately fond of it that I would have carried it out, I believe, in the teeth of Captain Smollett himself. This was to slip out under cover of the night, cut the Hispaniola adrift, and let her go ashore where she fancied. I had quite made up my mind that the mutineers, after their repulse of the morning, had nothing nearer their hearts than to up anchor and away to sea; this, I thought, it would be a fine thing to prevent, and now that I had seen how they left their watchman unprovided with a boat, I thought it might be done with little risk. It was a night out of ten thousand for my purpose. The fog had now buried all heaven. As the last rays of daylight dwindled and disappeared, absolute blackness settled down on Treasure Island. And when, at last, I shouldered the coracle, and groped my way stumblingly out of the hollow, there were but two points visible on the whole anchorage.

One was the great fire on shore, by which the defeated pirates lay carousing in the swamp. The other, a mere blur of light upon the darkness, indicated by the position of the anchored ship.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE EBB-TIDE RUNS

The coracle—as I had ample reason to know before I was done with her—was a very safe boat for a person of my height and weight, but she was the most cross-grained, lop-sided craft to manage. Even Ben Gunn himself has admitted that she was "queer to handle till you knew her way." Certainly I did not know her way. She turned in every direction but the one I was bound to go; the most part of the time we were broadside on, and I am very sure I never should have made the ship at all but for the tide. By good fortune, paddle as I pleased, the tide was still sweeping me down; and there lay the Hispaniola right in the fair way, hardly to be missed. First she loomed before me like a blot of something yet blacker than darkness, then her spars and hull began to take shape, and the next moment, as it seemed, I was alongside of her hawser, and had laid hold. The hawser was as taut as a bowstring—so strong she pulled upon her anchor. One cut with my sea gully, and the Hispaniola would go humming down the tide.

So far so good; but it next occurred to my recollection that a taut hawser, suddenly cut, is a thing as dangerous as a kicking horse. This brought me to a full stop, and if fortune had not again particularly favored me, I should have had to abandon my design. But the light air which had begun blowing from the southeast and south had hauled round after nightfall into the southwest. Just while I was meditating, a puff came, caught the Hispaniola, and forced her up into the current; and, to my great joy, I felt the hawser slacken in my grasp, and the hand by which I held it dip for a second under water. With that I made my mind up, took out my gully, opened it with my teeth, and cut one strand after another, till the vessel swung by two.

Then I lay quiet, waiting to sever these last when the strain should be once more lightened by a breath of wind.

All this time I had heard the sound of loud voices from the cabin. One I recognized for the cockswain's, Israel Hands, that had been Flint's gunner in former days. The other was, of course, my friend of the red night-cap. Both men were plainly the worse of drink, and they were still drinking; for, even while I was listening, one of them, with a drunken cry, opened the stern window and threw out something, which I divined to be an empty bottle.

On shore, I could see the glow of the great camp-fire burning warmly through the shore-side trees. Some one was singing a dull, old, droning sailors' song, with a droop and quaver at the end of every verse, and seemingly no end to it at all but the patience of the singer.

At last the breeze came; the schooner sidled and drew nearer in the dark; I felt the hawser slacken once more, and with a good, tough effort cut the last fibers through. The breeze had but little action on the coracle, and I was almost instantly swept against the bows of the Hispaniola. At the same time the schooner began to turn upon her heel, spinning slowly, end for end, across the current. I wrought like a fiend, for I expected every moment to be swamped; and since I found I could not push the coracle directly off, I now shoved straight astern. At length I was clear of my dangerous neighbor, and just as I gave the last impulsion, my hands came across a light cord that was trailing overboard across the stern bulwarks. Instantly I grasped it.

Why I should have done so I can hardly say. It was at first mere instinct, but once I had it in my hands and found it fast, curiosity began to get the upper hand, and I determined I should have one look through the cabin window. I pulled in hand over hand on the cord, and, when I judged myself near enough, rose at infinite risk to about half my height, and thus commanded the roof and a slice of the interior of the cabin. By this time the schooner and her little consort

were gliding pretty swiftly through the water; indeed, we had already fetched up level with the camp-fire. The ship was talking, as sailors say, loudly, treading the innumerable ripples with an incessant weltering splash; and until I got my eye above the window-sill I could not comprehend why the watchmen had taken no alarm. One glance, however, was sufficient; and it was only one glance that I dared take from that unsteady skiff. It showed me Hands and his companion locked together in deadly wrestle, each with a hand upon the other's throat. I dropped upon the thwart again, none too soon, for I was near overboard.

The endless ballad had come to an end at last, and the whole diminished company about the camp-fire had broken into the chorus I had heard so often:

"Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—"

I was just thinking how busy drink and the devil were at that very moment in the cabin of the Hispaniola, when I was surprised by a sudden lurch of the coracle. At the same moment she yawed sharply and seemed to change her course. The speed in the meantime had strangely increased. I opened my eyes at once. The Hispaniola herself seemed to stagger in her course, and I saw her spars toss a little against the blackness of the night; nay, as I looked longer, I made sure she also was wheeling to the southward. I glanced over my shoulder and my heart jumped against my ribs. There, right behind me, was the glow of the camp-fire. The current had turned at right angles, sweeping round along with it the tall schooner and the little dancing coracle; ever quickening, ever muttering louder, it went spinning through the narrows for the open sea.

Suddenly the schooner in front of me gave a violent yaw, turning, perhaps, through twenty degrees; and almost at the same moment one shout followed another from on board. I could hear feet pounding on the companion ladder and I knew that the two

drunkards had at last been interrupted in their quarrel and awakened to a sense of their disaster. I lay down flat in the bottom of that wretched skiff and devoutly recommended my spirit to its Maker. At the end of the straits I made sure we must fall into some bar of raging breakers, where all my troubles would be ended speedily. So I must have lain for hours, continually beaten to and fro upon the billows, and never ceasing to expect death at the next plunge. Gradually weariness grew upon me, until sleep at last intervened, and in my sea-tossed coracle I lay and dreamed of home and the old Admiral Benbow.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE CRUISE OF THE CORACLE

It was broad day when I awoke and found myself tossing at the southwest end of Treasure Island. The sun was up, but was still hid from me behind the great bulk of the Spy-glass, which on this side descended almost to the sea in formidable cliffs.

Haulbowline Head and Mizzen-mast Hill were at my elbow, the hill bare and dark, the head bound with cliffs forty or fifty feet high and fringed with great masses of fallen rock. I was scarce a quarter of a mile to seaward, and it was my first thought to paddle in and land. That notion was soon given over. Among the fallen rocks the breakers spouted and bellowed; and I saw myself, if I ventured nearer, dashed to death upon the rough shore.

I had a better chance before me. North of Haulbowline Head the land runs in a long way, leaving, at low tide, a long stretch of yellow sand. To the north of that again, there comes another cape—Cape of the Woods, as it was marked upon the chart—buried in tall green pines, which descended to the margin of the sea. I remembered

what Silver had said about the current that sets northward along the whole west coast of Treasure Island; and seeing from my position that I was already under its influence, I preferred to reserve my strength for an attempt to land upon the Cape of the Woods. There was a great, smooth swell upon the sea. The wind blowing steady and gentle from the south, there was no contrariety between that and the current, and the billows rose and fell unbroken. Had it been otherwise, I must long ago have perished; I began after a little to grow very bold, and set up to try my skill at paddling. But even a small change in the disposition of the weight will produce violent changes in the behavior of a coracle. And I had hardly moved before the boat, giving up at once her gentle, dancing movement, ran straight down a slope of water so steep that it made me giddy, and struck her nose, with a spout of spray, deep into the side of the next wave. I was terrified, and fell back into my old position, whereupon the coracle seemed to find her head again, and led me softly as before among the billows. It was plain she was not to be interfered with, and at that rate what hope had I left of reaching land?

I began to be horribly frightened, but I kept my head. First, moving with all care, I gradually bailed out the coracle with my sea-cap; then getting my eye once more above the gunwale, I set myself to study how it was she managed to slip so quietly through the rollers. I found each wave, instead of the big, smooth, glossy mountain it looks from shore, or from a vessel's deck, was for all the world like any range of hills on the dry land, full of peaks and smooth places and valleys. The coracle, left to herself, turning from side to side, avoided the steep slopes and higher toppling summits of the wave. "Well, now," thought I to myself, "it is plain I must lie where I am, and not disturb the balance; but it is plain, also, that I can put the paddle over the side, and from time to time, in smooth places, give her a shove or two toward land." No sooner thought than done. It was very tiring and slow work, yet I did visibly gain ground; and, as we drew near the

Cape of the Woods, though I saw I must infallibly miss that point, I was close in. I could see the cool, green tree-tops swaying together in the breeze, and I felt sure I should make the next promontory without fail.

It was high time, for I now began to be tortured with thirst. The sight of the trees so near at hand had almost made me sick with longing; but the current had soon carried me past the point; and, as the next reach of sea opened out, I beheld a sight that changed the nature of my thoughts. Right in front of me, not half a mile away, I beheld the Hispaniola under sail.

She was under her mainsail and two jibs, and the beautiful white canvas shone in the sun like snow. When I first sighted her, all her sails were drawing, she was lying a course about northwest, and I presumed the men on board were going round the island on their way back to the anchorage. Presently she began to fetch more and more to the westward, so that I thought they had sighted me and were going about in chase. At last, however, she fell right into the wind's eye, was taken dead aback, and stood there a while helpless, with her sails shivering. "Clumsy fellows," said I, "they must still be drunk as owls." And I thought how Captain Smollett would have set them skipping.

Meanwhile the schooner gradually fell off, and filled again upon another tack, sailed swiftly for a minute or so, and brought up once more dead in the wind's eye. Again and again was this repeated. It became plain to me that nobody was steering. And if so, where were the men? Either they were dead drunk, or had deserted her, I thought, and perhaps if I could get on board I might return the vessel to her captain. The current was bearing coracle and schooner northward at an equal rate. As for the latter's sailing, it was so wild and intermittent, that she certainly gained nothing, if she did not even lose. If only I dared to sit up and paddle I made sure that I could overhaul her.

Up I got, was welcomed almost instantly by another cloud of spray, but this time stuck to my purpose and set myself with all my strength to paddle after the unsteered Hispaniola. I gained rapidly on the schooner. I could see the brass glisten on the tiller as it banged about.

At last I had my chance. The breeze fell, for some seconds, very low, and the current gradually turning her, the Hispaniola revolved slowly round her center and at last presented me her stern. The mainsail hung drooped like a banner. She was stock-still but for the current. I was not a hundred yards from her when the wind came again in a clap; she filled on the port tack and was off again, stooping and skimming like a swallow.

My first impulse was one of despair, but my second was toward joy. Round she came, till she was broadside on to me—round still till she had covered a half, and then two-thirds, and then three-quarters of the distance that separated us. I could see the waves boiling white under her forefoot. And then, of a sudden, I began to comprehend. I was on the summit of one swell when the schooner came stooping over the next. The bowsprit was over my head. I sprung to my feet and leaped, stamping the coracle under water. With one hand I caught the jib-boom, while my foot was lodged between the stay and the brace, and as I still clung there panting, a dull blow told me that the schooner had charged down upon and struck the coracle, and that I was left without retreat on the Hispaniola.

CHAPTER XXV

I STRIKE THE JOLLY ROGER

I had scarce gained a position on the bowsprit when the flying jib flapped and filled upon the other tack with a report like a gun. This had nearly tossed me off into the sea, and now I lost no time, crawled back along the bowsprit and tumbled headforemost on the deck. I was on the lee side of the forecastle, and the mainsail, which was still drawing, concealed from me a certain portion of the after-deck. Not a soul was to be seen.

Suddenly the Hispaniola came right into the wind. The jibs behind me cracked aloud; the rudder slammed to; the whole ship gave a heave, and at the same moment the main-boom swung inboard, and showed me the lee after-deck. There were the two watchmen, sure enough; Red-cap on his back, as stiff as a handspike; Israel Hands propped against the bulwarks, his chin on his chest, his face as white as a tallow candle. At the same time I observed, around both of them, splashes of dark blood upon the planks, and began to feel sure that they had killed each other.

While I was looking and wondering, in a calm moment when the ship was still, Israel Hands turned partly round, with a low moan. The moan went right to my heart; but when I remembered the talk I had overheard from the apple barrel, all pity left me. I walked aft until I reached the mainmast. "Come aboard, Mr. Hands," I said, ironically. He rolled his eyes round heavily, but he was too far gone to express surprise. All he could do was to utter one word: "Brandy!" It occurred to me there was no time to lose, and dodging the boom as it once more lurched across the deck, I slipped aft and down the companion-stairs into the cabin.

I went into the cellar; all the barrels were gone, and of the bottles

a most surprising number had been drunk out and thrown away. Certainly, since the mutiny began, not a man of them could ever have been sober. Foraging about, I found a bottle with some brandy left, for Hands; and for myself I routed out some biscuit, some pickled fruits, a great bunch of raisins, and a piece of cheese. With these I came on deck, went forward to the water-breaker, and had a good, deep drink of water, and not until then, gave Hands the brandy.

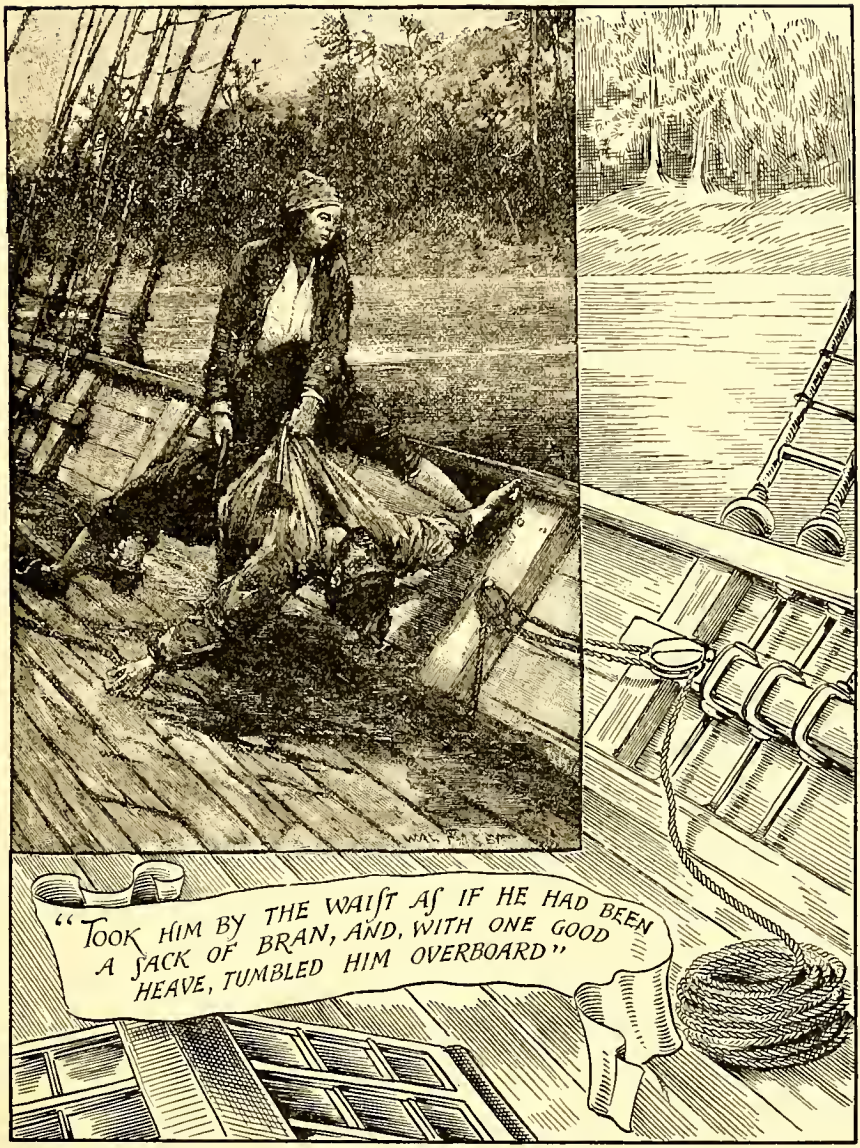
He must have drunk a gill before he took the bottle from his mouth. "Ay," said he, "by thunder, but I wanted some o' that!"—"Much hurt?" I asked him. He grunted, or, rather, I might say, he barked.—"If that doctor was aboard," he said, "I'd be right enough in a couple of turns; but I don't have no manner of luck, you see, and that's what's the matter with me. And where mought you have come from?"—"Well," said I, "I've come aboard to take possession of this ship, Hands, and you'll please regard me as your captain until further notice. By the by," I continued, "I can't have these colors," and, again dodging the boom, I ran to the color lines, hauled down their cursed black flag, and chucked it overboard. "God save the king!" said I, waving my cap; "and there's an end to Captain Silver."

He watched me keenly and slyly, his chin all the while on his breast. "I reckon," he said at last, "you'll kind o' want to get ashore, now. S'pose we talks."—"Why, yes," says I, "with all my heart, Hands. Say on."—"This man," he began, nodding feebly at the corpse, "this man and me got the canvas on her, meaning for to sail her back. Well, *he's* dead now, he is, and who's to sail this ship, I don't see. Without I give you a hint, you ain't that man, as far's I can tell. Now, look here, you gives me food and drink, and a old ankecher to tie my wound up, you do; and I'll tell you how to sail her; and that's about square all round, I take it."—"I'll tell you one thing," says I, "I'm not going back to Captain Kidd's anchorage. I mean to get into North Inlet, and beach her quietly there."—"To be sure you did," he cried. "Why, I ain't sich an infernal lubber, after all.

I can see, can't I? I've tried my fling, I have, and I've lost, and it's you has the wind of me. North Inlet? Why, I haven't no ch'ice, not I. I'd help you sail her up to Execution Dock, by thunder! so I would."

Well, we struck our bargain on the spot. In three minutes I had the Hispaniola sailing easily before the wind along the coast of Treasure Island, with good hopes of turning the northern point ere noon. Then I lashed the tiller and went below to my own chest, where I got a soft silk handkerchief. With this, and with my aid, Hands bound up the great stab he had received in the thigh, and after he had eaten a little and had a swallow or two more of the brandy, he began to pick up visibly, sat straighter up, spoke louder and clearer, and looked in every way another man.

The breeze served us admirably. We skimmed before it like a bird, the coast of the island flashing by, and the view changing every minute. Soon we had turned the corner of the rocky hill that ends the island on the north. I was greatly elated with my new command, and pleased with the bright, sunshiny weather. I had now plenty of water and good things to eat, and my conscience, which had smitten me hard for my desertion, was quieted by the great conquest I had made. I should, I think, have had nothing left to desire but for the eyes of the cockswain as they followed me derisively about the deck, and the odd smile that appeared continually on his face. It was a smile that had in it a grain of derision, a shadow of treachery, as he craftily watched and watched me at my work.


"TOOK HIM BY THE WAIST AS IF HE HAD BEEN A SACK OF BRAN, AND, WITH ONE GOOD HEAVE, TUMBLED HIM OVERBOARD"

Page 119.

CHAPTER XXVI

ISRAEL HANDS

The wind, serving us to a desire, now hauled into the west. We could run so much the easier from the northwest corner of the island to the mouth of the North Inlet. Only, as we dared not beach her until the tide had flowed a good deal farther, time hung on our hands. The cockswain told me how to lay the ship to; after a good many trials I succeeded, and we both sat in silence, over another meal.

"Cap'n," said he, at length, with that same uncomfortable smile, "I'll take it kind if you'd step down into that there cabin and get me a—well, a—shiver my timbers! I can't hit the name on't. Well, you get me a bottle of wine, Jim—this here brandy's too strong for my head."

Now the cockswain's hesitation seemed to be unnatural; and, as for the notion of his preferring wine to brandy, I entirely disbelieved it. The whole story was a pretext. He wanted me to leave the deck —so much was plain, but with what purpose I could in no way imagine. His eyes never met mine; they kept wandering to and fro, up and down. I was prompt with my answer, however, for I saw where my advantage lay. "Some wine?" I said. "Will you have white or red?" —"Well, I reckon it's about the blessed same to me, shipmate," he replied; "so it's strong, and plenty of it, what's the odds?"—"All right," I answered. "I'll bring you port, Hands. But I'll have to dig for it." With that I scuttled down the companion with all the noise I could, slipped off my shoes, ran quietly along the sparred gallery, mounted the forecastle ladder, and popped my head out of the fore companion. I knew he would not expect to see me there, yet I took every precaution possible, and certainly the worst of my suspicions proved too true.

He had risen from his position to his hands and knees, and though his leg obviously hurt him pretty sharply when he moved—for I could hear him stifle a groan—yet he trailed himself across the deck. In half a minute he had reached the port scuppers, and picked out of a coil of rope a long knife, or rather a short dirk. He looked upon it for a moment, tried the point upon his hand, and then hastily concealing it in the bosom of his jacket, trundled back again into his old place against the bulwark. This was all that I required to know. Israel could move about; he was now armed, and it was plain that I was meant to be the victim. Yet I felt sure that I could trust him in one point, since in that our interests jumped together, and that was in the disposition of the schooner. We both desired to have her stranded safe in a sheltered place, and until that was done, I considered that my life would be spared.

While I was thus turning the business over in my mind, I had stolen back to the cabin, slipped once more into my shoes, and laid my hand at random on a bottle of wine, and now made my reappearance on the deck.

Hands lay as I had left him, all fallen together in a bundle, and with his eyelids lowered as though he were too weak to bear the light. He looked up, however, at my coming, and took a good swig, with his favorite toast of "Here's luck!" Then he lay quiet for a little, and then, pulling out a stick of tobacco, begged me to cut him a quid. "Cut me a junk o' that," says he, "for I haven't no knife, and hardly strength enough, so be as I had. Ah, Jim, Jim, I reckon I've missed stays! Cut me a quid as'll likely be the last, lad; for I'm for my long home, and no mistake."

"Look here," he added, suddenly changing his tone, "the tide's made good enough by now. You just take my orders, Cap'n Hawkins, and we'll sail slap in and be done with it."

All told, we had scarce two miles to run, but the navigation was delicate; the entrance to this northern anchorage was not only narrow

and shoal, but lay east and west, so that the schooner must be nicely handled to be got in. Scarcely had we passed the head before the land closed around us. The shores of North Inlet were as thickly wooded as those of the southern anchorage, but the space was longer and narrower, and more like, what in truth it was, the estuary of a river. "Now," said Hands, "look there; there's a pet bit for to beach a ship in. Fine flat sand, never a catspaw, trees all around of it and flowers a-blowing like a garding." He issued his commands, which I breathlessly obeyed; till, all of a sudden, he cried: "Now, my hearty, luff!" And I put the helm hard up and the Hispaniola swung round rapidly and ran stem on for the low-wooded shore.

The excitement of these last maneuvers had somewhat interfered with the watch I had kept hitherto upon the cockswain, and I stood watching the ripples spreading out before the bows. I might have fallen without a struggle had not a sudden disquietude seized upon me and made me turn my head. Sure enough, when I looked around, there was Hands, already halfway toward me, with the dirk in his right hand. At the same instant, he threw himself forward and I leaped sideways toward the bows. As I did so I left hold of the tiller, which sprung sharp to leeward; and I think this saved my life, for it struck Hands across the chest, and stopped him, for the moment, dead. Before he could recover I was safe out of the corner where he had me trapped, with all the deck to dodge about. Just forward of the main-mast I stopped, drew a pistol from my pocket, took a cool aim and drew the trigger. The hammer fell, but there followed neither flash nor sound; the priming was useless with sea-water. I cursed myself for my neglect. Why had not I, long before, reprimed and reloaded my only weapons?

Wounded as he was, it was wonderful how fast he could move. One thing I saw plainly; I must not simply retreat before him, or he would speedily hold me boxed into the bows, as a moment since he had so nearly boxed me in the stern. Once so caught, and nine

or ten inches of the dirk would be my last experience on this side of eternity. I placed my palms against the mainmast, which was of a goodish bigness, and waited, every nerve upon the stretch. Seeing that I meant to dodge, he also paused, and a moment or two passed in feints on his part and corresponding movements upon mine.

Well, while things stood thus, suddenly the Hispaniola struck, staggered, ground for an instant in the sand, and then, swift as a blow, canted over to the port side, till the deck stood at an angle of forty-five degrees. We were both of us capsized in a second, and both of us rolled, almost together, into the scuppers, but I was the first afoot again. The sudden canting of the ship had made the deck no place for running on; I had to find some new way of escape. Quick as thought, I sprung into the mizzen-shrouds, rattled up hand over hand, and did not draw a breath till I was seated on the cross-trees.

I had been saved by being prompt; the dirk had struck not half a foot below me, as I pursued my upward flight; and there stood Israel Hands with his mouth open and his face upturned to mine, a perfect statue of surprise and disappointment. Now that I had a moment to myself, I lost no time in changing the priming of my pistol, and then, having one ready for service, and to make assurance doubly sure, I proceeded to draw the load of the other, and recharged it afresh from the beginning.

My new employment struck Hands all of a heap; he began to see the dice going against him, and after an obvious hesitation, he also hauled himself heavily into the shrouds, and, with the dirk in his teeth, began slowly and painfully to mount. It cost him no end of time and groans to haul his wounded leg behind him; and I had quietly finished my arrangements before he was much more than a third of the way up. Then, with a pistol in either hand, I addressed him: "One more step, Hands," said I, "and I'll blow your brains out!"

He stopped instantly. I could see by the workings of his face that he was trying to think. At last, with a swallow or two, he spoke,

his face still wearing the expression of perplexity. In order to speak he had to take the dagger from his mouth, but, in all else, he remained unmoved. "Jim," says he, "I reckon we're fouled, you and me, and we'll have to sign articles. I'd have had you but for that there lurch; but I don't have no luck, not I; and I reckon I'll have to strike, which comes hard, you see, for a master mariner to a ship's younker like you, Jim."

I was drinking in his words and smiling away, as conceited as a cock upon a walk, when, all in a breath, back went his right hand over his shoulder. Something sung like an arrow through the air; I felt a blow and then a sharp pang, and there I was pinned by the shoulder to the mast. In the horrid pain and surprise of the moment both my pistols went off, and both escaped out of my hands. They did not fall alone; with a choked cry the cockswain loosed his grasp upon the shrouds, and plunged head first into the water.

CHAPTER XXVII

"PIECES OF EIGHT"

Owing to the cant of the vessel, the masts hung far out over the water, and from my perch on the cross-trees I had nothing below me but the surface of the bay. As the water settled, I could see him lying huddled together on the clean, bright sand in the shadow of the vessel's sides, food for fish in the very place where he had designed my slaughter. I was no sooner certain of this than I began to feel sick, faint, and terrified. The hot blood was running over my back and chest. The dirk, where it had pinned my shoulder to the mast, seemed to burn like a hot iron. Gradually, however, my pulses quieted down to a more natural time, and I was once more in possession of myself.

It was my first thought to pluck forth the dirk; but either it stuck too hard or my nerve failed me, and I desisted with a violent shudder. Oddly enough, that very shudder did the business. The knife, in fact, had come the nearest in the world to missing me altogether; it held me by a mere pinch of skin, and this the shudder tore away. The blood ran down the faster, to be sure, but I was my own master again, and only tacked to the mast by my coat and shirt. These last I broke through with a sudden jerk, and then regained the deck by the starboard shrouds.

I went below and did what I could for my wound; it pained me a good deal, and still bled freely, but it was neither deep nor dangerous, nor did it greatly gall me when I used my arm. Then I looked around me, and as the ship was now, in a sense, my own, I began to think of clearing it from its last passenger—the dead man, O'Brien. He had pitched against the bulwarks, and as the habit of tragical adventures had worn off almost all my terror for the dead, I took him by the waist as if he had been a sack of bran, and, with one good heave, tumbled him overboard. He went in with a sounding plunge, the red cap came off and remained floating on the surface, and as soon as the splash subsided, I could see him and Israel lying side by side, both wavering with the tremulous movement of the water.

I was now alone upon the ship; the tide had just turned. The sun was within a few degrees of setting. The evening breeze had sprung up, and though it was well warded off by the hill with the two peaks upon the east, the cordage had begun to sing a little softly to itself and the idle sails to rattle to and fro. I began to see a danger to the ship. The jibs I speedily doused and brought tumbling to the deck, but the mainsail was a harder matter. Of course, when the schooner canted over, the boom had swung outboard, and the cap of it and a foot or two of sail hung even under water. I thought this made it still more dangerous, yet the strain was so heavy that I half feared to meddle. At last I got my knife and cut the halyards. The peak

dropped instantly, a great belly of loose canvas floated broad upon the water; and since, pull as I liked, I could not budge the downhaul, that was the extent of what I could accomplish. For the rest, the Hispaniola must trust to luck, like myself.

By this time the whole anchorage had fallen into shadow—the last rays, I remember, falling through a glade of the wood. It began to be chill, the tide was rapidly fleeting seaward, the schooner settling more and more on her beam-ends. I scrambled forward and looked over. It seemed shallow enough, and holding the cut hawser in both hands for a last security, I let myself drop softly overboard. The water scarcely reached my waist; the sand was firm and covered with ripple-marks, and I waded ashore in great spirits, leaving the Hispaniola on her side, with her mainsail trailing wide upon the surface of the bay. About the same time the sun went fairly down, and the breeze whistled low in the dusk among the tossing pines.

At least, and at last, I was off the sea, nor had I returned thence empty-handed. There lay the schooner, clear at last from buccaneers and ready for our own men to board and get to sea again. I had nothing nearer my fancy than to get home to the stockade and boast of my achievements. Possibly, I might be blamed a bit for my truantry, but the recapture of the Hispaniola was a clinching answer, and I hoped that even Captain Smollett would confess I had not lost my time. So thinking, and in famous spirits, I began to set my face homeward for the block-house and my companions.

The wood was pretty open, and keeping along the lower spurs, I had soon turned the corner of the hill, and not long after waded to the mid-calf across the water-course. This brought me nearer to where I had encountered Ben Gunn, the maroon, and I walked more circumspectly, keeping an eye on every side. Gradually the night fell blacker; it was all I could do to guide myself even roughly toward my destination; the double hill behind me and the Spy-glass on my right hand loomed faint and fainter, the stars were few and pale, and in

the low ground where I wandered I kept tripping among bushes and rolling into sandy pits.

Suddenly a kind of brightness fell about me. I looked up; a pale glimmer of moonbeams had alighted on the summit of the Spy-glass, and soon after I saw something broad and silvery moving low down behind the trees, and knew the moon had risen. With this to help me, I passed rapidly over what remained to me of my journey; and, sometimes walking, sometimes running, impatiently drew near to the stockade. Yet, as I began to tread the grove that lies before it, I was not so thoughtless but that I slacked my pace and went a trifle warily. It would have been a poor end of my adventures to get shot down by my own party in mistake.

The moon was climbing higher and higher; its light began to fall here and there in masses through the more open districts of the wood, and right in front of me a glow of a different color appeared among the trees. It was red and hot, and now and again it was little darkened—as it were the embers of a bonfire smoldering. For the life of me I could not think what it might be. At last I came right down upon the borders of the clearing. The western end was already steeped in moonshine; the rest, and the block-house itself, still lay in a black shadow, checkered with long, silvery streaks of light. On the other side of the house an immense fire had burned itself into clear embers and shed a steady, red reverberation, contrasting strongly with the mellow paleness of the moon. There was not a soul stirring, nor a sound beside the noises of the breeze.

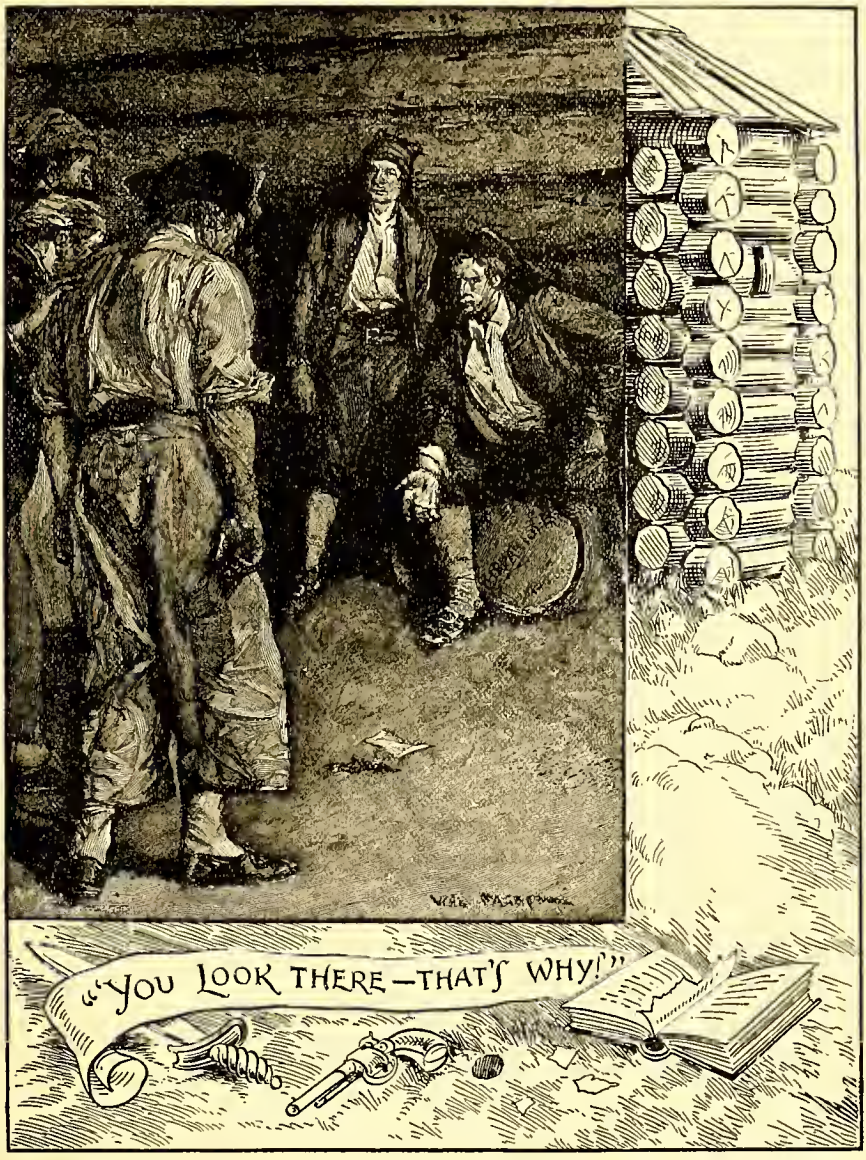
I stopped, with much wonder in my heart, and perhaps a little terror also. It had not been our way to build great fires; we were, indeed, by the captain's orders, somewhat niggardly of firewood, and I began to fear that something had gone wrong while I was absent.

I stole round by the eastern end, keeping close in shadow, and at a convenient place, where the darkness was thickest, crossed the palisade. To make assurance surer, I got upon my hands and knees, and

crawled toward the corner of the house. As I drew nearer, my heart was suddenly and greatly lightened. It was not a pleasant noise in itself, and I have often complained of it at other times, but just then it was like music to hear my friends snoring together so loud and peaceful in their sleep. The sea-cry of the watch, that beautiful "All's well," never fell more reassuringly on my ears.

By this time I had got to the door and stood up. All was dark within, so that I could distinguish nothing by the eye. As for sounds, there was the steady drone of the snorers, and a small occasional noise, a flickering or pecking that I could in no way account for. With my arms before me I walked steadily in. I should lie down in my own place and enjoy their faces when they found me in the morning. My foot struck something yielding—it was a sleeper's leg, and he turned and groaned, but without awaking. And then, all of a sudden, a shrill voice broke forth out of the darkness: "Pieces of eight! pieces of eight! pieces of eight! pieces of eight! pieces of eight!" and so forth, without pause or change, like the clacking of a tiny mill. Silver's green parrot, Captain Flint! It was she whom I had heard pecking at a piece of bark; it was she, keeping better watch than any human being, who thus announced my arrival with her wearisome refrain.

I had no time left me to recover. At the sharp, clipping tone of the parrot, the sleepers awoke and sprung up, and with a mighty oath the voice of Silver cried: "Who goes?" I turned to run, struck violently against one person, recoiled, and ran full into the arms of a second, who, for his part, closed upon and held me tight. "Bring a torch, Dick," said Silver, when my capture was thus assured. And one of the men left the log-house, and presently returned with a lighted brand.



Page 134.

CHAPTER XXVIII

IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP

The red glare of the torch lighting up the interior of the block-house, showed me the worst of my apprehensions realized. The pirates were in possession of the house and stores; there was a cask of cognac, there were the pork and bread, as before; and, what tenfold increased my horror, not a sign of any prisoner. I could only judge that all had perished, and my heart smote me sorely that I had not been there to perish with them.

There were six of the buccaneers, all told; not another man was left alive. The parrot sat, preening her plumage, on Long John's shoulder. He himself, I thought, looked somewhat paler and more stern. "So," said he, "here's Jim Hawkins, shiver my timbers! dropped in, like, eh? Well, come, I take that friendly." And thereupon he sat down across the brandy-cask, and began to fill a pipe. "Give me the loan of a link, Dick," said he; and then, when he had a good light, "That'll do, my lad," he added, "stick the glim in the wood heap; and you, gentlemen, bring yourselves to!—you needn't stand up for Mr. Hawkins; *he'll* excuse you, you may lay to that. And so, Jim, here you are, and quite a pleasant surprise for poor old John. I see you were smart when first I set my eyes on you, but this here gets away from me clean, it do."

To all this, as may be well supposed, I made no answer. They had set me with my back against the wall, and I stood there, looking Silver in the face, pluckily enough, to all outward appearance, but with black despair in my heart.

Silver took a whiff or two of his pipe with great composure, and then ran on again: "Now, you see, Jim, so be you *are* here," says he, "I'll give you a piece of my mind. I've always liked you, I have, for

a lad of spirit and the picter of my own self when I was young and handsome. I always wanted you to jine and take your share, and die a gentleman, and now, my cock, you've got to. The doctor himself is gone dead agin you—the 'ungrateful scamp' was what he said; and the short and the long of the whole story is about here: You can't go back to your own lot, for they won't have you; and, without you start a third ship's company all by yourself, which might be lonely, you'll have to jine with Cap'n Silver." So far so good. My friends, then, were still alive, and though I partly believed the truth of Silver's statement, that the cabin party were incensed at me for my desertion, I was more relieved than distressed by what I heard.

"I don't say nothing as to your being in our hands," continued Silver, "though there you are, and you may lay to it. I'm all for argument; I never seen good come out o' threatening. If you like the service, well, you'll jine; and if you don't, Jim, why, you're free to answer no—free and welcome, shipmate; and if fairer can be said by mortal seaman, shiver my sides;"—"Am I to answer, then?" I asked, with a very tremulous voice.—"Lad," said Silver, "no one's a-pressing of you. Take your bearings. None of us won't hurry you, mate."—"Well," says I, growing a bit bolder, "if I'm to choose, I declare I have a right to know what's what, and why you're here, and where my friends are."—"Wot's wot?" repeated one of the buccaneers, in a deep growl. "Ah, he'd be a lucky one as knowed that!" —"You'll, perhaps, batten down your hatches till you're spoke, my friend," cried Silver, truculently, to this speaker. "Yesterday morning, Mr. Hawkins," said he, "down came Doctor Livesey with a flag of truce. Says he: 'Cap'n Silver, you're sold out. Ship's gone!' Well, maybe we'd been taking a glass, and a song to help it round. Leastways none of us had looked out. We looked out, and, by thunder! the old ship was gone. I never seen a pack o' fools look fishier. 'Well,' says the doctor, 'let's bargain.' We bargained, him and I, and here we are; stores, brandy, block-house, and the firewood

you was thoughtful enough to cut. As for them, they've tramped; I don't know where's they are." He drew again quietly at his pipe. "And lest you should take it into that head of yours," he went on, "that you was included in the treaty, here's the last word that was said: 'How many are you,' says I, 'to leave?' 'Four,' says he—'four, and one of us wounded. As for that boy, I don't know where he is, confound him,' says he, 'nor I don't much care. We're about sick of him.' These was his words."

"Is that all?" I asked.—"Well, it's all you're to hear, my son," returned Silver.—"And now I am to choose?"—"And now you are to choose, and you may lay to that," said Silver.—"Well," said I, "I am not such a fool but I know pretty well what I have to look for. I've seen too many die since I fell in with you. But there's a thing or two I have to tell you," I said, and by this time I was quite excited; "and the first is this: Here you are, in a bad way; ship lost, treasure lost, men lost; your whole business gone to wreck; and if you want to know who did it—it was I! I was in the apple barrel the night we sighted land, and I heard you, John, and you, Dick Johnson, and Hands, who is now at the bottom of the sea, and told every word you said before the hour was out. And as for the schooner, it was I who cut her cable, and it was I who killed the men you had aboard of her, and it was I who brought her where you'll never see her more, not one of you. The laugh's on my side; I've had the top of this business from the first. Kill me, if you please, or spare me. But one thing I'll say, and no more; if you spare me, by-gones are by-gones, and when you fellows are in court for piracy I'll save you all I can. It is for you to choose. Kill another and do yourselves no good, or spare me and keep a witness to save you from the gallows."

I stopped, for I was out of breath, and, to my wonder, not a man of them moved, but all sat staring at me like as many sheep. And while they were still staring I broke out again: "And now, Mr. Silver," I said, "I believe you're the best man here, and if things go to the

worst, I'll take it kind of you to let the doctor know the way I took it." —"I'll bear it in mind," said Silver, with an accent so curious that I could not, for the life of me, decide whether he were laughing at my request or had been favorably affected by my courage.

"I'll put one to that," cried the old mahogany-faced seaman—Morgan by name. "It was him that knowed Black Dog."—"Well, and see here," added the sea-cook, "I'll put another again to that, by thunder! for it was this same boy that faked the chart from Billy Bones. First and last we've split upon Jim Hawkins!"—"Then here goes!" said Morgan, with an oath. And he sprung up, drawing his knife as if he had been twenty.

"Avast, there!" cried Silver. "Who are you, Tom Morgan? Maybe you thought you were captain here, perhaps. By the powers, but I'll teach you better! There's never a man looked me between the eyes and seen a good day a'terward, Tom Morgan, you may lay to that." Morgan paused, but a hoarse murmur rose from the others.—"Tom's right," said one.—"I stood hazing long enough from one," added another. "I'll be hanged if I'll be hazed by you, John Silver." —"Did any of you gentlemen want to have it out with *me*?" roared Silver, bending forward, with his pipe still glowing in his right hand. "Put a name on what you're at; you ain't dumb, I reckon. Him that wants shall get it. You know the way; you're all gentlemen o' fortune, by your account. Well, I'm ready. Take a cutlass him that dares and I'll see the color of his inside, crutch and all, before that pipe's empty."

Not a man stirred; not a man answered. "That's your sort, is it?" he added, returning his pipe to his mouth. "Not worth much to fight, you ain't. P'r'aps you can understand King George's English. I'm cap'n here by 'lection. I'm cap'n here because I'm the best man by a long sea-mile. You won't fight, as gentlemen o' fortune should; then, by thunder, you'll obey. I like that boy now. He's more a man than

any pair of rats of you in this here house, and what I say is this: Let me see him as'll lay a hand on him—that's what I say."

There was a long pause after this. I stood straight up against the wall, my heart still going like a sledge-hammer, but with a ray of hope now shining in my bosom. Silver leaned back against the wall, his arms crossed, his pipe in the corner of his mouth, as calm as though he had been in church; yet his eye kept wandering furtively, and he kept the tail of it on his unruly followers. They, on their part, drew gradually together toward the far end of the block-house, and the low hiss of their whispering sounded in my ears continuously, like a stream. One after another they would look up, but it was not toward me, it was toward Silver that they turned their eyes.

"You seem to have a lot to say," remarked Silver, spitting far into the air. "Pipe up and let me hear it, or lay to."—"Ax your pardon, sir," returned one of the men; "you're pretty free with some of the rules, maybe you'll kindly keep an eye upon the rest. This crew's dissatisfied; this crew has its rights like other crews, and by your own rules I take it we can talk together. I ax your pardon, sir, acknowledging you for to be capting at this present, but I claim my right and steps outside for a council." And with an elaborate sea-salute, this fellow stepped coolly toward the door and disappeared out of the house. One after another, the rest followed his example, each making a salute as he passed, each adding some apology.

The sea-cook instantly removed his pipe. "Now look you here, Jim Hawkins," he said in a steady whisper that was no more than audible, "you're within half a plank of death, and what's a long sight worse, of torture. They're going to throw me off. But you mark, I stand by you through thick and thin. I didn't mean to; no, not till you spoke up. But I see you was the right sort. I says to myself: You stand by Hawkins, John, and Hawkins 'll stand by you. You're his last card, and by the living thunder, John, he's yours! Back to back, says I. You save your witness and he'll save your neck!" I

began dimly to understand.—"You mean all is lost?" I asked.—"Ay, by gum, I do!" he answered. "Ship gone, neck gone—that's the size of it. Once I looked into that bay, Jim Hawkins, and seen no schooner—well, I'm tough, but gave out. As for that lot and their council, mark me, they're outright fools and cowards. I'll save your life—if so be as I can—from them. But see here, Jim, tit for tat—you save Long John from swinging."

I was bewildered; it seemed a thing so hopeless he was asking—he, the old buccaneer, the ringleader throughout. "What I can do, that I'll do," I said.—"It's a bargain!" cried Long John. He hobbled to the torch, where it stood propped among the firewood, and took a fresh light to his pipe.

"Understand me, Jim," he said, returning. "I've a head on my shoulders, I have. I'm on squire's side now. I know you've got that ship safe somewheres. How you done it I don't know, but safe it is. Now you mark me. I ask no questions, nor I won't let others. I know when a game's up, I do; and I know a lad that's stanch. Ah, you that's young—you and me might have done a power of good together!" He drew some cognac from the cask into a tin cannikin. "Will you taste, messmate?" he asked, and when I had refused, "Well, I'll take a drain myself, Jim," said he. "I need a caulker, for there's trouble on hand. And, talking o' trouble, why did that doctor give me the chart, Jim?" My face expressed a wonder so unaffected that he saw the needlessness of further questions. "Ah, well, he did, though," said he. "And there's something under that, no doubt—something, surely, under that, Jim—bad or good." And he took another swallow of the brandy, shaking his great fair head like a man who looks forward to the worst.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE BLACK SPOT AGAIN

The council of the buccaneers had lasted some time, when one of them re-entered the house, and with a repetition of the same salute, which had in my eyes an ironical air, begged for a moment's loan of the torch. Silver briefly agreed, and this emissary retired again, leaving us together in the dark. "There's a breeze coming, Jim," said Silver, who had by this time adopted quite a friendly and familiar tone.

I turned to the loop-hole nearest me and looked out. The embers of the great fire had so far burned themselves out, and now glowed so low and duskily, that I understood why these conspirators desired a torch. About halfway down the slope to the stockade they were collected in a group; one held the light; another was on his knees in their midst, and I saw the blade of an open knife shine in his hand. I could just make out that he had a book as well as a knife, and was still wondering how anything so incongruous had come in their possession, when the kneeling figure rose once more to his feet, and the whole party began to move together toward the house. "Here they come," said I, and I returned to my former position, for it seemed beneath my dignity that they should find me watching them.—"Well, let 'em come, lad—let 'em come," said Silver, cheerily. "I've still a shot in my locker."

The door opened, and the five men, standing huddled together just inside, pushed one of their number forward. In any other circumstances it would have been comical to see his slow advances, hesitating as he set down each foot, but holding his closed right hand in front of him. "Step up, lad," cried Silver. "I won't eat you. Hand it over, lubber. I know the rules, I do; I won't hurt a deputation." Thus encouraged, the buccaneer stepped forth more briskly, and

having passed something to Silver, from hand to hand, slipped yet more smartly back again to his companions.

The sea-cook looked at what had been given him. "The black spot! I thought so," he observed. "Where might you have got the paper? Why, hello! look here, now; this ain't lucky! You've gone and cut this out of a Bible. What fool's cut a Bible?"—"Ah, there," said Morgan, "there. Wot did I say? No good'll come o' that, I said."—"Well, you've about fixed it now, among you," continued Silver. "You'll all swing now, I reckon. What soft-head lubber had a Bible?"—"It was Dick," said one.—"Dick, was it? Then Dick can get to prayers," said Silver. "He's seen his slice of luck, has Dick, and you may lay to that."

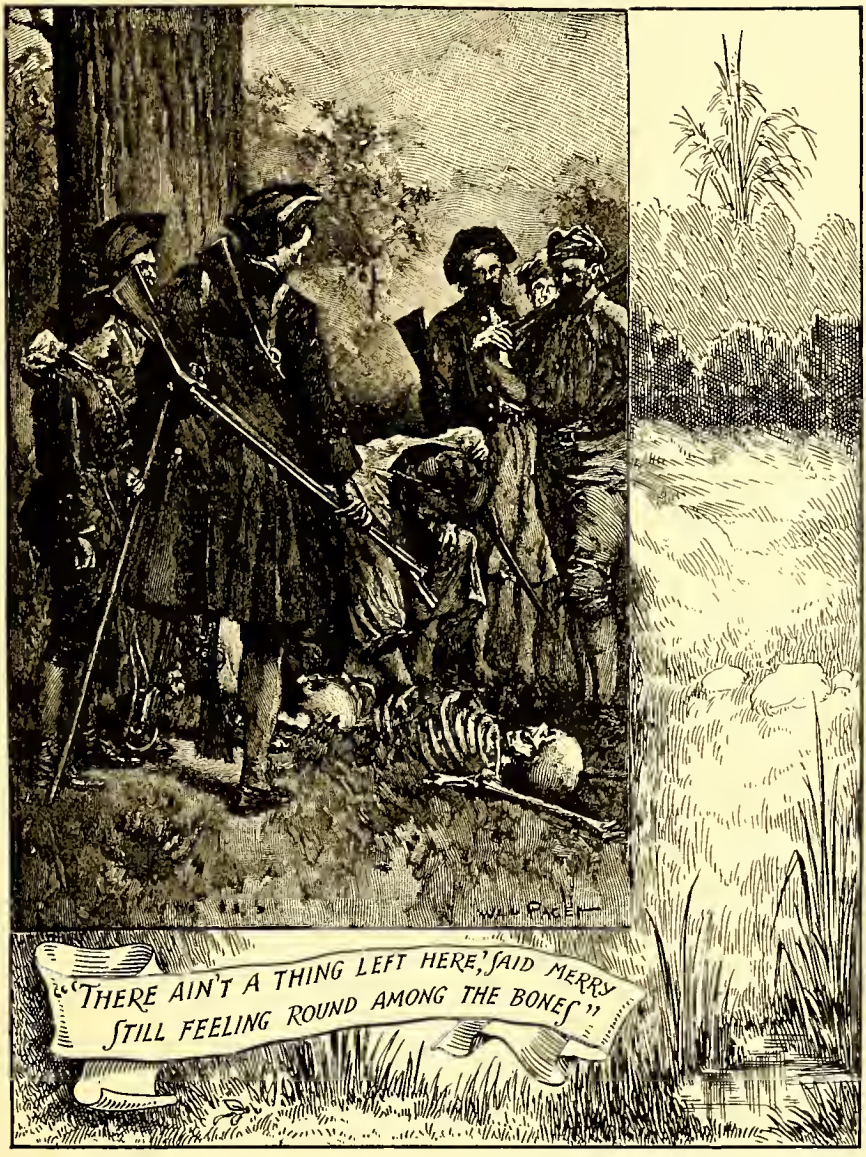
But here a long man with yellow eyes struck in. "Belay that talk, John Silver," he said. "This crew has tipped you the black spot in full council; just you turn it over, and see what's wrote there. Then you can talk."—"Thanky, George," replied the sea-cook. "You always was brisk for business, and has the rules by heart, George, as I am pleased to see. Ah! 'Deposed'—that's it, is it? Very pretty wrote, to be sure; like print, I swear. Your hand o' write, George? Why, you was gettin' quite a leadin' man in this here crew. You'll be cap'n next, I shouldn't wonder. Just oblige me with that torch again, will you? this pipe don't draw."

"Come, now," said George, "you don't fool this crew no more. You're over now, and you'll maybe step down off that barrel, and help vote."—"I thought you said you knowed the rules," returned Silver, contemptuously. "Leastways, if you don't, I do; and I wait here—and I'm still your cap'n, mind—till you outs with your grievances, and I reply; in the meantime, your black spot ain't worth a biscuit. After that we'll see."

"Oh," replied George, "you don't be under no kind of apprehension; *we're* all square, we are. First, you've made a hash of this cruise—you'll be a bold man to say no to that. Second, you let the

enemy out o' this here trap for nothing. Third, you wouldn't let us go at them upon the march. Oh, we see through you, John Silver; you want to play booty, that's what's wrong with you. And then, fourth, there's this here boy."—"Is that all?" asked Silver, quietly.—"Enough, too," retorted George.—"Well, now, look here, I'll answer these four p'ints; one after another. I made a hash o' this cruise, did I? Well, now, you all know what I wanted; and you all know, if that had been done, that we'd 'a' been aboard the Hispaniola this night as ever was, every man of us alive and fit, and the treasure in the hold of her, by thunder! Well, who crossed me? Who forced my hand, as was the lawful cap'n? Who tipped me the black spot the day we landed, and began this dance? Why, it was Anderson and Hands and you, George Merry! And you're the last above board of that same meddling crew; you, that sunk the lot of us! By the powers! but this tops the stiffest yarn to nothing."

Silver paused, and I could see by the faces of George and his late comrades that these words had not been said in vain. "That's for number one," cried the accused, wiping the sweat from his brow, for he had been talking with a vehemence that shook the house. "Why, I give you my word, I'm sick to speak to you. You've neither sense nor memory, and I leave it to fancy where your mothers was to let you come to sea. Sea! Gentlemen o' fortune! I reckon tailors is your trade."—"Go on, John," said Morgan. "Speak up to the others."—"Ah, the others!" returned John. "They're a nice lot, ain't they? You say this cruise is bungled. Ah! We're that near the gibbet that my neck's stiff with thinking on it. You've see 'em, maybe, hanged in chains, birds about 'em, seamen p'inting 'em out as they go down with the tide. And you can hear the chains a-jangle as you go about and reach for the other buoy. Now, that's about where we are, every mother's son of us. And if you want to know about number four, and that boy, why, shiver my timbers! isn't he a hostage? Are we going to waste a hostage? No, not us; he might be our last chance, and I


"THERE AIN'T A THING LEFT HERE,' SAID MERRY STILL FEELING ROUND AMONG THE BONES"

Page 145.

shouldn't wonder. Kill that boy? not me, mates! And number three? Ah, well, there's a deal to say to number three. Maybe you don't count it nothing to have a real college doctor come to see you every day—you, John, with your head broke—or you, George Merry, that had the ague shakes upon you not six hours agone, and has your eyes the color of lemon peel to this same moment on the clock? And maybe, perhaps, you didn't know there was a consort coming, either? But there is, and not so long till then; and we'll see who'll be glad to have a hostage when it comes to that. And as for number two, and why I made a bargain—well, you came crawling on your knees to me to make it—on your knees you came, you was that down-hearted—and you'd have starved, too, if I hadn't—but that's a trifle! you look there—that's why!" And he cast down upon the floor a paper that I instantly recognized—none other than the chart on yellow paper, with the three red crosses, that I had found in the oilcloth at the bottom of the captain's chest. Why the doctor had given it to him was more than I could fancy.

But if it were inexplicable to me, the appearance of the chart was incredible to the surviving mutineers. They leaped upon it like cats upon a mouse. It went from hand to hand, one tearing it from another; and by the oaths and cries and the childish laughter with which they accompanied their examination, you would have thought, not only they were fingering the very gold, but were at sea with it, besides, in safety. "Yes," said one, "that's Flint, sure enough. J. F. and a score below, with a clove hitch to it, so he done ever."—"Mighty pretty," said George. "But how are we to get away with it, and us no ship?"

Silver suddenly sprung up, and supporting himself with a hand against the wall: "Now, I give you warning, George," he cried. "One more word of your sauce, and I'll call you down and fight you. How? Why, how do I know? You had ought to tell me that—you and the rest that lost me my schooner, with your interference, burn

you! But not you, you can't; you ain't got the invention of a cockroach. But civil you can speak, and shall, George Merry, you may lay to that."—"That's fair now," said the old man Morgan.—"Fair! I reckon so," said the sea-cook. "You lost the ship; I found the treasure. Who's the better man at that? And now I resign, by thunder! Elect whom you please to be your cap'n now; I'm done with it."—"Silver!" they cried. "Barbecue forever! Barbecue for cap'n!"—"So that's the toon, is it?" cried the cook. "George, I reckon you'll have to wait another turn, friend, and lucky for you as I'm not a revengeful man. But that was never my way. And now, shipmates, this black spot? 'Tain't much good now, is it? Dick's crossed his luck and spoiled his Bible, and that's about all. Here, Jim—here's a cur'osity for you," and he tossed me the paper.

That was the end of the night's business. Soon after, with a drink all round, we lay down to sleep, and the outside of Silver's vengeance was to put George Merry up for sentinel, and threaten him with death if he should prove unfaithful.

CHAPTER XXX

ON PAROLE

I was awakened by a clear, hearty voice hailing us from the margin of the wood: "Block-house, ahoy!" it cried. "Here's the doctor." And the doctor it was. Although I was glad to hear the sound, yet my gladness was not without admixture; I felt ashamed to look him in the face.

"You, doctor! Top o' the morning to you, sir!" cried Silver, broad awake and beaming with good-nature in a moment. "Bright and early, to be sure; and it's the early bird, as the saying goes, that gets the rations. George, shake up your timbers, son, and help

Doctor Livesey over the ship's side. All a-doin' well, your patients was—all well and merry. We've quite a surprise for you, too, sir," he continued. "We've a little stranger here. A noo boarder and lodger, sir, and looking fit and taut as a fiddle; sle'p like a supercargo, he did, right alongside of John."

Doctor Livesey was by this time across the stockade and pretty near the cook, and I could hear the alteration in his voice as he said: "Not Jim?"—"The very same Jim as ever was," said Silver. The doctor stopped outright, although he did not speak, and it was some seconds before he seemed able to move on.—"Well, well," he said at last, "duty first and pleasure afterward, as you might have said yourself, Silver. Let us overhaul these patients of yours." A moment afterward he had entered the block-house, and with one grim nod to me, proceeded with his work among the sick. He seemed to me under no apprehension, though he must have known that his life, among these treacherous demons, depended on a hair, and he rattled on to his patients as if he were paying an ordinary professional visit in a quiet English family. His manner, I suppose, reacted on the men, for they behaved to him as if nothing had occurred—as if he were still ship's doctor, and they still faithful hands before the mast.

"You're doing well, my friend," he said to the fellow with the bandaged head, "and if ever any person had a close shave, it was you; your head must be as hard as iron. Well, George, how goes it? You're a pretty color, certainly; why, your liver, man, is upside down. Did he take that medicine, men?"—"Ay, ay, sir, he took it sure enough," returned Morgan.—"Because, you see, since I am mutineers' doctor, or prison doctor, as I prefer to call it," says Doctor Livesey, in his pleasantest way, "I make it a point of honor not to lose a man for King George (God bless him!) and the gallows." The rogues looked at each other, but swallowed the home-thrust in silence.

"Dick don't feel well, sir," said one.—"Don't he?" replied the doctor. "Well, step up here, Dick, and let me see your tongue. No,

I should be surprised if he did: the man's tongue is fit to frighten the French. Another fever."—"Ah, there," said Morgan, "that comed o' sp'iling Bibles."—"That comed—as you call it—of being arrant asses," retorted the doctor, "and not having sense enough to know honest air from poison. You'll all have the deuce to pay before you get that malaria out of your systems. Camp in a bog, would you? Silver, I'm surprised at you. Well," he added, after he had dosed them round, and they had taken his prescriptions, more like charity school-children than blood-guilty mutineers and pirates, "well, that's done for to-day. And now I should wish to have a talk with that boy, please." And he nodded his head in my direction carelessly."

George Merry was at the door, spitting and spluttering over some bad-tasted medicine; but at the first word of the doctor's proposal he swung round with a deep flush, and cried, "No!" and swore. Silver struck the barrel with his open hand.—"Si-lence!" he roared. "Doctor," he went on, in his usual tones, "I was thinking of that, knowing as how you had a fancy for the boy. And I take it I've found a way as'll suit all. Hawkins, will you give me your word of honor as a young gentleman not to slip your cable?" I readily gave the pledge required. "Then, doctor," said Silver, "you just step outside o' that stockade, and once you're there, I'll bring the boy down on the inside, and I reckon you can yarn through the spars. Good-day to you, sir, and all our dooties to the squire and Cap'n Smollett.

The explosion of disapproval, which nothing but Silver's black looks had restrained, broke out immediately the doctor had left the house. But he was twice the man the rest were, and his last night's victory had given him a huge preponderance on their minds. He called them all the fools and dolts you can imagine, said it was necessary I should talk to the doctor, fluttered the chart in their faces, asked them if they could afford to break the treaty the very day they were bound a-treasure-hunting. "No, by thunder!" he cried, "it's us must break the treaty when the time comes; and till then I'll gammon that

doctor, if I have to ile his boots with brandy." And then he bade them get the fire lighted, and stalked out upon his cruteh, with his hand on my shoulder, leaving them sileneed by his volubility rather than eonvinced. "Slow, lad, slow," he said. "They might round upon us in a twinkle of an eye if we was seen to hurry."

Very deliberately, then, did we advance across the sand to where the doetor waited us on the other side of the stoekade, and as soon as we were within easy speaking distanee, Silver stopped. "You'll make a note of this here also, doctor," said he, "and the boy'll tell you how I saved his life, and were deposed for it, too. Doctor, when a man's steering as near to the wind as me—playing ehuck-farthing with the last breath in his body, like—you wouldn't think it too mueh, mayhap, to give him one good word! You'll please bear in mind it's not my life only now—it's that boy into the bargain; and you'll speak me fair, doctor, and give me a bit o' hope to go on, for the sake of mercy." Silver was a ehanged man, once he was out there and had his back to his friends and the block-house; his cheeks seemed to have fallen in, his voiee trembled; never was a soul more dead in earnest.

"Why, John, you're not afraid?" asked Doctor Livesey.—"Doctor, I'm no coward; no, not I—not *so* mueh!" and he snapped his fingers. "If I was I wouldn't say it. But I'll own up fairly I've the shakes upon me for the gallows. You're a good man and a true; I never seen a better man! And you'll not forget what I done good, not any more than you'll forget the bad, I know. And I step aside—see here—and leave you and Jim alone. And you'll put that down for me, too, for it's a long stretch, is that!" So saying, he stepped back a little way till he was out of ear-shot, and there sat down upon a tree-stump and began to whistle, spinning round now and again upon his seat so as to eommand a sight sometimes of me and the doctor, and sometimes of his unruly ruffians as they went to and fro in the sand, between the fire and the house, from which they brought forth pork and bread to make the breakfast.

"So, Jim," said the doctor, sadly, "here you are. As you have brewed, so shall you drink, my boy. Heaven knows I can not find it in my heart to blame you; but this much I will say, be it kind or unkind, when Captain Smollett was well you dared not have gone off, and when he was ill, and couldn't help it, by George, it was downright cowardly!" I will own that I here began to weep.—"Doctor," I said, "you might spare me. I have blamed myself enough; my life's forfeit any way, and I should have been dead now if Silver hadn't stood for me; and, doctor, believe this, I can die—and I dare say I deserve it—but what I fear is torture. If they come to torture me——"—"Jim," the doctor interrupted, and his voice was quite changed, "Jim, I can't have this. Whip over, and we'll run for it."—"Doctor," said I, "I passed my word."—"I know, I know," he cried. "We can't help that, Jim, now. I'll take it on my shoulders, my boy; but stay here, I can not let you. Jump! One jump and you're out, and we'll run for it like antelopes."—"No," I replied, "you know right well you wouldn't do the thing yourself; neither you, nor squire, nor captain, and no more will I. Silver trusted me; I passed my word, and back I go. But, doctor, you did not let me finish. If they come to torture me, I might let slip a word of where the ship is, for I got the ship, part by luck and part by risking, and she lies in North Inlet, on the southern beach, and just below high water. At half-tide she must be high and dry."—"The ship!" exclaimed the doctor.

Rapidly I described to him my adventures, and he heard me out in silence. "There is a kind of fate in this," he observed, when I had done. "Every step it's you that saves our lives. You found out the plot; you found Ben Gunn—the best deed that you ever did, or will do, though you live to ninety. Oh, by Jupiter! and talking of Ben Gunn, why, this is the mischief in person. Silver!" he cried, "Silver! —I'll give you a piece of advice," he continued, as the cook drew near again; "don't you be in any great hurry after that treasure."

"Why, sir," said Silver, "I can only, asking your pardon, save

my life and the boy's by seeking for that treasure; and you may lay to that."—"Well, Silver," replied the doctor, "if that is so, I'll go one step farther; look out for squalls when you find it!"—"Sir," said Silver, "as between man and man, that's too much and too little. What you're after, why you left the block-house, why you given me that there chart, I don't know, now, do I? and yet I done your bidding with my eyes shut and never a word of hope! But no, this here's too much. If you won't tell me what you mean plain out, just say so, and I'll leave the helm."

"No," said the doctor, musingly, "I've no right to say more; it's not my secret, you see, Silver, or, I give you my word, I'd tell it to you. But I'll go as far with you as I dare go. And first, I'll give you a bit of hope; Silver, if we both get out alive out of this wolf trap, I'll do my best to save you, short of perjury." Silver's face was radiant.—"You couldn't say more, I am sure, sir, not if you was my mother," he cried.—"Well, that's my first concession," added the doctor. "My second is a piece of advice. Keep the boy close beside you, and when you need help, halloo. I'm off to seek it for you, and that itself will show you if I speak at random. Good-by, Jim." And Doctor Livesey shook hands with me through the stockade, nodded to Silver, and set off at a brisk pace into the wood.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE TREASURE-HUNT—FLINT'S POINTER

"Jim," said Silver, when we were alone, "if I saved your life, you saved mine, and I'll not forget it. I seen the doctor waving you to run for it—with the tail of my eye, I did—and I seen you say no as plain as hearing. Jim, that's one to you. And now, Jim, you and me must stick close, back to back like, and we'll save our necks in spite o' fate and fortune."

Just then a man hailed us from the fire that breakfast was ready, and we were soon seated about the sand over biscuit and fried junk. They had lighted a fire, fit to roast an ox; in the same wasteful spirit, they had cooked, I suppose, three times more than we could eat; and one of them, with an empty laugh, threw what was left into the fire, which blazed and roared again over this unusual fuel; and what with wasted food and sleeping sentries, though they were bold enough for a brush and be done with it, I could see their entire unfitness for anything like a prolonged campaign. Even Silver, eating away, with Captain Flint upon his shoulder, had not a word of blame for their recklessness.

"Ay, mates," said he, "it's lucky you have Barbecue to think for you with this here head. I got what I wanted, I did. Sure enough, they have the ship. Where they have it, I don't know yet; but once we hit the treasure, we'll have to jump about and find out. And then, mates, us that has the boats, I reckon, has the upper hand. As for hostage," he continued, "that's his last talk, I guess, with them he loves so dear. I've got my piece o' news, and thanky to him for that; but it's over and done. Once we got the ship and treasure both, and off to sea like jolly companions, why, then we'll talk Hawkins over, we will, and we'll give him his share, to be sure, for all his kindness."

It was no wonder the men were in a good humor now. For my

part, I was horribly east down. Should the seheme he had now sketehed prove feasible, Silver, already doubly a traitor, would not hesitate to adopt it. Nay, and even if things so fell out that he was foreed to keep his faith with Doetor Livesey, even then what danger lay before us! What a moment that would be when the suspieions of his followers turned to eertainty, and he and I should have to fight for dear life—he, a eripple, and I, a boy—against five strong and aetive seamen! Add to this double apprehension the mystery that still hung over the behavior of my friends; their unexplained desertion of the stoekade; their inexplieable eession of the ehart; or, harder still to understand, the doetor's last warning to Silver, "Look out for squalls when you find it"; and you will readily believe how little taste I found in my breakfast, and with how uneasy a heart I set forth behind my eaptors on the quest for treasure.

We made a eurious figure, had any one been there to see us; all in soiled sailor elothes and all but me armed to the teeth. Silver had two guns slung about him, one before and one behind—besides the great eutlass at his waist, and a pistol in eaeh poeket of his square-tailed eoat. To eomplete his strange appearanee, Captain Flint sat pereheđ upon his shoulder and gabbled odds and ends of purposeless sea-talk. I had a line about my waist, and followed obediently after the sea-eook, who held the loose end of the rope. For all the world, I was led like a daneing bear. The other men were variously burdened; some earrying pieks and shovels—for that had been the very first neeessary they brought ashore from the Hispaniola—others laden with pork, bread, and brandy for the midday meal. Well, thus equipped, we all set out and straggled, one after another, to the beaeh, where the two gigs awaited us. Both were to be earried along with us, for the sake of safety; and so, with our numbers divided between them, we set forth upon the bosom of the anehorage.

As we pulled over there was some diseussion on the ehart. The red cross was, of eourse, far to large to be a guide; and the terms of

HAL PAUER
"LONG JOHN HAD FIRED TWO BARRELS OF A PISTOL INTO THE STRUGGLING MERRY"

Page 151.

the note on the back, as you will hear, admitted of some ambiguity. They ran, the reader may remember, thus:

"Tall tree, Spy-glass shoulder, bearing a point to the N. of N. N. E.

"Skeleton Island E. S. E. and by E.

"Ten feet."

A tall tree was thus the principal mark. Now, right before us, the anchorage was bounded by a plateau from two to three hundred feet high, adjoining on the north the sloping southern shoulder of the Spy-glass, and rising again toward the south into the rough, cliffy eminence called the Mizzen-mast Hill. The top of the plateau was dotted thickly with pine trees of varying height. Every here and there, one of a different species rose forty or fifty feet clear above its neighbors, and which of these was the particular "tall tree" of Captain Flint could only be decided on the spot, and by the readings of the compass. Yet, although that was the case, every man on board the boats had picked a favorite of his own ere we were halfway over, Long John alone shrugging his shoulders and bidding them wait till they were there.

We pulled easily, by Silver's directions, not to weary the hands prematurely; and landed at the mouth of the second river—that which runs down a woody cleft of the Spy-glass. Thence, bending to our left, we began to ascend the slope toward the plateau. The party spread itself abroad, in a fan shape, shouting and leaping to and fro. About the center, and a good way behind the rest, Silver and I followed —I tethered by my rope, he plowing, with deep pants, among the sliding gravel. From time to time, indeed, I had to lend him a hand, or he must have missed his footing and fallen backward down the hill.

We had thus proceeded for about half a mile, and were approaching the brow of the plateau, when the man upon the farthest left began to cry aloud, as if in terror. Shout after shout came from him, and

the others began to run in his direction. "He can't have found the treasure," said old Morgan, hurrying past us from the right, "for that's clean a-top." Indeed, as we found when we also reached the spot, it was something very different. At the foot of a pretty big pine, and involved in a green creeper, a human skeleton lay, with a few shreds of clothing, on the ground.—"He was a seaman," said George Merry, who, bolder than the rest, had gone up close, and was examining the rags of clothing. "Leastways, this is good sea-cloth."—"Ay, ay," said Silver, "like enough; you wouldn't look to find a bishop here, I reckon. But what sort of a way is that for bones to lie? 'Tain't in natur'." Indeed, on a second glance, it seemed impossible to fancy that the body was in a natural position.

The man lay perfectly straight—his feet pointing in one direction, his hands raised above his head like a diver's, pointing directly in the opposite.

"I've taken a notion into my old numskull," observed Silver. "Here's the compass; there's the tip-top p'int of Skeleton Island, stickin' out like a tooth. Just take a bearing, will you, along the line of them bones." It was done. The body pointed straight in the direction of the island, and the compass read duly E. S. E. by E. "I thought so," cried the cook; "this here is a p'inter. Right up there is our line for the Pole Star and the jolly dollars. But by thunder! if it don't make me cold inside to think of Flint. This is one of *his* jokes, and no mistake. Come, come," he continued, "he's dead, and he don't walk, that I know; leastways he won't walk by day, and you may lay to that. Care killed a cat. Fetch ahead for the doubloons."

We started, certainly, but in spite of the hot sun and the staring daylight, the pirates no longer ran separate and shouting through the wood, but kept side by side and spoke with bated breath. The terror of the dead buccaneer had fallen on their spirits.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE TREASURE-HUNT—THE VOICE AMONG THE TREES

Partly from the damping influence of this alarm, partly to rest Silver and the sick folk, the whole party sat down as soon as they had gained the brow of the ascent. Before us, over the tree-tops, we beheld the Cape of the Woods fringed with surf; behind, we not only looked down upon the anchorage and Skeleton Island, but saw—clear across the spit and the eastern lowlands—a great field of open sea upon the east. Sheer above us rose the Spy-glass, here dotted with single pines, there black with precipices. There was no sound but that of the distant breakers mounting from all around, and the chirp of countless insects in the brush. Not a man, not a sail upon the sea; the very largeness of the view increased the sense of solitude.

Silver, as he sat, took certain bearings with his compass. "There are three 'tall trees,'" said he, "about in the right line from Skeleton Island. 'Spy-glass Shoulder,' I take it, means that lower p'int there. It's child's play to find the stuff now. I've half a mind to dine first."

All of a sudden, out of the middle of the trees in front of us, a thin, high, and trembling voice struck up the well-known air and words:

"Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!"

I never have seen men more dreadfully affected than the pirates. The color went from their six faces like enchantment; some leaped to their feet, some clawed hold of others; Morgan groveled on the ground.

"It's Flint, by——!" cried Merry.—"Come," said Silver, struggling with his ashen lips to get the word out, "that won't do. Stand by to go about. This is a rum start, and I can't name the voice, but

it's some one sky-larking—some one that's flesh and blood, and you may lay to that." His courage had come back as he spoke, and some of the color to his face along with it. Already the others had begun to lend an ear to this encouragement, and were coming a little to themselves, when the same voice broke out again—not this time singing, but in a faint, distant hail, that echoed yet fainter among the clefts of the Spy-glass. "Darby McGraw," it wailed, "Darby McGraw! Darby McGraw!" again and again; and then rising a little higher, and with an oath, "Fetch aft the rum, Darby!"

The buccaneers remained rooted to the ground, their eyes starting from their heads. Long after the voice had died away they still stared in silence, dreadfully, before them. "That fixes it!" gasped one.—"Let's go."—"They was his last words," moaned Morgan, "his last words above-board." Dick had his Bible out and was praying volubly. He had been well brought up, had Dick, before he came to sea and fell among bad companions.

Still, Silver was unconquered. I could hear his teeth rattle in his head, but he had not yet surrendered. "Nobody in this here island ever heard of Darby," he muttered; "not one but us that's here. Shipmates," he cried, "I'm here to get that stuff, and I'll not be beat by man or devil. I never was feared of Flint in his life, and, by the powers, I'll face him dead. There's seven hundred thousand pound not a quarter of a mile from here. When did ever a gentleman o' fortune show his stern to that much dollars for a boozy old seaman with a blue mug;—and him dead, too?" But there was no sign of reawakening courage in his followers; rather, indeed, of growing terror at the irreverence of his words.

"Belay there, John!" said Merry. "Don't you cross a sperrit." And the rest were all too terrified to reply. They would have run away severally had they dared, but fear kept them together, and kept them close by John. He, on his part, had pretty well fought his weakness down.

"Sperrit? Well, maybe," he said. "But there's one thing not clear to me. There was an echo. Now, no man ever seen a sperrit with a shadow. Well, then, what's he doing with an echo, I should like to know? That ain't in natur', surely." This argument seemed weak enough to me. But you can never tell what will affect the superstitious, and, to my wonder, George Merry was greatly relieved. —"Well, that's so," he said. "You've a head upon your shoulders, John, and no mistake. 'Bout ship, mates! And come to think on it, it was like Flint's voice, I grant you, but not just so clear away like it, after all. It was liker somebody else's voice now—it was liker——" —"By the powers, Ben Gunn!" roared Silver.—"Ay, and so it were," cried Morgan, springing on his knees. "Ben Gunn it were!"—"It don't make much odds, do it, now?" asked Dick. "Ben Gunn's not here in the body, any more'n Flint." But the older hands greeted this remark with scorn.—"Why, nobody minds Ben Gunn," cried Merry; "dead or alive, nobody minds him!"

It was extraordinary how their spirits had returned, and how the natural color had revived in their faces. Soon they were chatting together, with intervals of listening; and not long after, hearing no further sound, they shouldered the tools and set forth again, Merry walking first with Silver's compass to keep them on the right line with Skeleton Island. He had said the truth; dead or alive, nobody minded Ben Gunn.

It was fine open walking here, upon the summit; our way lay a little downhill, for the plateau tilted toward the west. The pines, great and small, grew wide apart; and even between the clumps of nutmeg and azalea, wide open spaces baked in the hot sunshine. The first of the tall trees was reached, and, by the bearing, proved the wrong one. So with the second. The third rose nearly two hundred feet into the air above a clump of underwood. But it was not its size that now impressed my companions; it was the knowledge that seven hundred thousand pounds in gold lay somewhere buried below its

spreading shadow. The thought of the money, as they drew nearer, swallowed up their previous terrors. Their eyes burned in their heads; their feet grew speedier and lighter; their whole soul was bound up in that fortune that lay waiting there for each of them.

Silver hobbled, grunting, on his crutch; his nostrils stood out and quivered; he plucked furiously at the line that held me to him, and, from time to time, turned his eyes upon me with a deadly look. Certainly he took no pains to hide his thoughts. In the immediate nearness of the gold, all else had been forgotten; and I could not doubt that he hoped to seize the treasure, find the Hispaniola, cut every honest throat about that island, and sail away as he had at first intended, laden with crimes and riches. Shaken as I was with these alarms, it was hard for me to keep up with the rapid pace of the treasure-hunters. Now and again I tumbled, and it was then that Silver plucked so roughly at the rope and launched at me his murderous glances. We were now at the margin of the thicket. "Huzza, mates, all together!" shouted Merry, and the foremost broke into a run. And suddenly, not ten yards farther, we beheld them stop. A low cry arose. Silver doubled his pace, digging away with the foot of his crutch like one possessed, and next moment he and I had come also to a dead halt. Before us was a great excavation, not very recent, for the sides had fallen in and grass had sprouted on the bottom. In this were the shaft of a pick broken in two and the boards of several packing cases strewn round. On one of these boards I saw branded with a hot iron the name "Walrus"—the name of Flint's ship. All was clear to probation. The *cache* had been found and rifled—the seven hundred thousand pounds were gone!

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE FALL OF A CHIEFTAIN

There never was such an overturn in this world. Each of these six men was as though he had been struck. But with Silver the blow passed almost instantly. Every thought of his soul had been set full-stretch, like a racer, on that money; well, he was brought up in a single second, dead; and he kept his head, found his temper, and changed his plan before the others had had time to realize the disappointment. "Jim," he whispered, "take that, and stand by for trouble." And he passed me a double-barreled pistol. At the same time he began quietly moving northward, and in a few steps had put the hollow between us two and the other five. Then he looked at me and nodded, as much as to say: "Here is a narrow corner," as, indeed, I thought it was. His looks were now quite friendly, and I was so revolted at these constant changes that I could not forbear whispering: "So you've changed sides again."

There was no time left for him to answer in. The buccaneers, with oaths and cries, began to leap, one after another, into the pit, and to dig with their fingers, throwing the boards aside as they did so. Morgan found a piece of gold. He held it up with a perfect spout of oaths. It was a two-guinea piece, and it went from hand to hand among them for a quarter of a minute. "Two guineas!" roared Merry, shaking it at Silver. "That's your seven hundred thousand pounds, is it? You're the man for bargains, ain't you? You're him that never bungled nothing, you wooden-headed lubber!"—"Dig away, boys," said Silver, with the coolest insolence; "you'll find some pig-nuts, and I shouldn't wonder."—"Pig-nuts!" repeated Merry, in a scream. "Mates, do you hear that? I tell you now, that man there knew it all along. Look in the face of him, and you'll see it wrote

there."—"Ah, Merry," remarked Silver, "standing for eap'n again? You're a pushing lad, to be sure." But this time every one was entirely in Merry's favor. They began to seramble out of the exeavation, darting furious glanees behind them. One thing I observed, whieh looked well for us; they all got out upon the opposite side from Silver.

Well, there we stood, two on one side, five on the other, the pit between us, and nobody serewed up high enough to offer the first blow. Silver never moved; he watehed them, very upright on his eruteh, and looked as eool as ever I saw him. He was brave, and no mistake.

At last, Merry seemed to think a speeeh might help matters. "Mates," says he, "there's two of them alone there; one's the old eripple that brought us all here and blundered us down to this; the other's that eub that I mean to have the heart of. Now, mates——"

He was raising his arm and his voiee, and plainly meant to lead a eharge. But just then—eraek! eraek! eraek!—three musket-shots flashed out of the thieket. Merry tumbled headforemost into the exeavation; the man with the bandage spun round like a teetotum, and fell all his length upon his side, where he lay dead, and the other three turned and ran for it with all their might. Before you eould wink Long John had fired two barrels of a pistol into the struggling Merry. At the same moment the doetor, Gray, and Ben Gunn joined us, with smoking muskets, from among the nutmeg-trees. "Forward!" eried the doetor. "Double quiek, my lads. We must head 'em off the boats." And we set off at a great paee, sometimes plunging through the bushes to the ehest.

I tell you, but Silver was anxious to keep up with us. The work that man went through, leaping on his eruteh till the museles of his ehest were fit to burst, was work no sound man ever equaled; and so thinks the doetor. As it was, he was already thirty yards behind us, and on the verge of strangling, when we reaehed the brow of the slope. "Doetor," he hailed, "see there! no hurry!" Sure enough

there was no hurry. In a more open part of the plateau we could see the three survivors still running in the same direction as they had started, right for Mizzen-mast Hill. We were already between them and the boats, and so we four sat down to breathe, while Long John, mopping his face, came slowly up with us.

"Thank ye, kindly, doctor," says he. "You came in in about the nick, I guess, for me and Hawkins. And so it's you, Ben Gunn!" he added. "Well, you're a nice one to be sure."—"I'm Ben Gunn, I am," replied the maroon, wriggling like an eel in his embarrassment. "And," he added, after a long pause, "how do, Mr. Silver! Pretty well, I thank ye, says you."—"Ben, Ben," murmured Silver, "to think as you've done me."

The doctor sent back Gray for one of the pick-axes, deserted, in their flight, by the mutineers; and then as we proceeded leisurely downhill to where the boats were lying, related, in a few words, what had taken place. It was a story that profoundly interested Silver, and Ben Gunn, the half-idiot maroon, was the hero from beginning to end. Ben, in his long, lonely wanderings about the island, had found the skeleton. It was he that had rifled it; he had found the treasure; he had dug it up; he had carried it on his back, in many weary journeys, from the foot of the tall pine to a cave he had on the two-pointed hill at the northeast angle of the island, and there it had lain stored in safety.

When the doctor had wormed this secret from him, on the afternoon of the attack, and when, next morning, he saw the anchorage deserted, he had gone to Silver, given him the chart, which was now useless; given him the stores, for Ben Gunn's cave was well supplied with goats' meat salted by himself; given anything and everything to get a chance of moving in safety from the stockade to the two-pointed hill, there to be clear of malaria and keep a guard upon the money. "As for you, Jim," he said, "it went against my heart, but I did what

"ALL THREE OF THEM KNEELING TOGETHER ON A SPIT OF SAND"

Page 157.

I thought best for those who had stood by their duty; and if you were not one of these, whose fault was it?"

That morning, finding that I was to be involved in the disappointment he had prepared for the mutineers, he had run all the way to the cave, and, leaving squire to guard the captain, had taken Gray and the maroon, and started, making the diagonal across the island, to be at hand beside the pine. Soon, however, he saw that our party had the start of him; and Ben Gunn, being fleet of foot, had been dispatched in front to do his best alone. Then it had occurred to him to work upon the superstitions of his former shipmates; and he was so far successful that Gray and the doctor had come up and were already ambushed before the arrival of the treasure-hunters.

"Ah," said Silver, "it was fortunate for me that I had Hawkins here. You would have let old John be cut to bits, and never given it a thought, doctor."—"Not a thought," replied Doctor Livesey, cheerily.

And by this time we had reached the gigs. The doctor, with the pick-axe, demolished one of them, and then we all got aboard the other, and set out to go round by the sea for North Inlet. This was a run of eight or nine miles. Soon we passed out of the straits and doubled the southeast corner of the island, round which, four days ago, we had towed the Hispaniola. As we passed the two-pointed hill we could see the black mouth of Ben Gunn's cave, and a figure standing by it, leaning on a musket. It was the squire, and we waved a handkerchief and gave him three cheers, in which the voice of Silver joined as heartily as any.

Three miles farther, just inside the mouth of North Inlet, what should we meet but the Hispaniola, cruising by herself. The last flood had lifted her, and had there been much wind, or a strong tide current, as in the southern anchorage, we should never have found her more, or found her stranded beyond help. As it was, there was little amiss, beyond the wreck of the mainsail. Another anchor was got

ready, and dropped in a fathom and a half of water. We all pulled round again to Rum Cove, the nearest point for Benn Gunn's treasure-house; and then Gray, single-handed, returned with the gig to the Hispaniola, where he was to pass the night on guard.

A gentle slope ran up from the beach to the entrance of the cave. At the top, the squire met us. To me he was cordial and kind, saying nothing of my escapade, either in the way of blame or praise. At Silver's polite salute he somewhat flushed. "John Silver," he said, "you're a prodigious villain and imposter—a monstrous imposter, sir. I am told I am not to prosecute you. Well, then, I will not. But the dead men, sir, hang about your neck like millstones."—"Thank you kindly, sir," replied Long John, again saluting.—"How dare you to thank me!" cried the squire. "It is a gross dereliction of my duty. Stand back!" And thereupon we all entered the cave. It was a large, airy place, with a little spring and a pool of clear water, overhung with ferns. The floor was sand. Before a big fire lay Captain Smollett; and in a far corner, only duskily flickered over by the blaze, I beheld great heaps of coin and quadrilaterals built of bars of gold. That was Flint's treasure that we had come so far to seek, and that had cost already the lives of seventeen men from the Hispaniola. How many it had cost in the amassing, perhaps no man alive could tell. Yet there were still three upon that island—Silver, and old Morgan, and Ben Gunn—who had each taken his share in these crimes, as each had hoped in vain to share in the reward.—"Come in, Jim," said the captain. "You're a good boy in your line, Jim; but I don't think you and me'll go to sea again. You're too much of the born favorite for me. Is that you, John Silver? What brings you here, man?"—"Come back to do my dooty, sir," returned Silver.—"Ah!" said the captain, and that was all he said.

What a supper I had of it that night, with all my friends around me; and what a meal it was, with Ben Gunn's salted goat, and some delicacies and a bottle of old wine from the Hispaniola. Never, I am

sure, were people gayer or happier. And there was Silver, sitting back almost out of the fire-light, but eating heartily, prompt to spring forward when anything was wanted, even joining quietly in our laughter—the same bland, polite, obsequious seaman of the voyage out.

CHAPTER XXXIV

AND LAST

The next morning we fell early to work, for the transportation of this great mass of gold near a mile by land to the beach, and thence three miles by boat to the Hispaniola, was a considerable task for so small a number of workmen. The three fellows still abroad upon the island did not greatly trouble us; a single sentry on the shoulder of the hill was sufficient to insure us against any sudden onslaught, and we thought, besides, they had had more than enough of fighting.

Therefore the work was pushed on briskly. Gray and Ben Gunn came and went with the boat, while the rest during their absence piled treasure on the beach. Two of the bars, slung in a rope's end, made a good load for a grown man—one that he was glad to walk slowly with. For my part, as I was not much use of carrying, I was kept busy all day in the cave, packing the minted money into bread-bags.

It was a strange collection; English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Georges, and Louises, doubloons and double guineas and moidores, and sequins, the pictures of all the kings of Europe for the last hundred years, strange oriental pieces stamped with what looked like wisps of strings or bits of spider's web, round pieces and square pieces, and pieces bored through the middle, as if to wear them round your neck—nearly every variety of money in the world must, I think, have found a place in that collection, and for number, I am sure they were like autumn leaves, so that my back ached with stooping and my

fingers with sorting them out. Day after day this work went on; by every evening a fortune had been stowed aboard, but there was another fortune waiting for the morrow; and all this time we heard nothing of the three surviving mutineers.

At last—I think it was on the third night—the doctor and I were strolling on the shoulder of the hill where it overlooks the lowlands of the isle, when, from out the thick darkness below, the wind brought us a noise between shrieking and singing. It was only a snatch that reached our ears, followed by the former silence. "Heaven forgive them," said the doctor; " 'tis the mutineers!"—"All drunk, sir," struck in the voice of Silver from behind us.

Well, that was about the last news we had of the three pirates. Only once we heard a gunshot a great way off, and supposed them to be hunting. A council was held and it was decided that we must desert them on the island—to the huge glee, I must say, of Ben Gunn, and with the strong approval of Gray. We left a good stock of powder and shot, the bulk of the salt goat, a few medicines and some other necessaries, tools, clothing, a spare sail, a fathom or two of rope, and, by the particular desire of the doctor, a handsome present of tobacco.

That was about our last doing on the island. Before that we had got the treasure stowed and had shipped enough water and the remainder of the goat meat, in case of any distress; and at last, one fine morning, we weighed anchor, and stood out of North Inlet, the same colors flying that the captain had flown and fought under at the palisade.

The three fellows must have been watching us closer than we thought; for coming through the narrows we had to lie very near the southern point, and there we saw all three of them kneeling together on a spit of sand with their arms raised in supplication. The doctor hailed them and told them of the stores we had left, and where they were to find them, but they continued to call us by name and appeal to

us, for God's sake, to be merciful and not leave them to die in such a place. At last, seeing the ship still bore on her course, and was now swiftly drawing out of ear-shot, one of them—I know not which it was—leaped to his feet with a hoarse cry, whipped his musket to his shoulder. and sent a shot whistling over Silver's head and through the mainsail. After that we kept under cover of the bulwarks, and when next I looked out they had disappeared from the spit, and the spit itself had almost melted out of sight in the growing distance. That was, at least, the end of that; and before noon, to my inexpressible joy, the highest rock of Treasure Island had sunk into the blue round of sea.

We were so short of men that every one on board had to bear a hand. We laid her head for the nearest port in Spanish America, for we could not risk the voyage home without fresh hands; and as it was, we were all worn out before we reached it.

It was just at sundown when we cast anchor in a most beautiful land-locked gulf, and were immediately surrounded by shore-boats full of negroes and Mexican Indians and half-bloods, selling fruits and vegetables. The sight of so many good-humored faces, the taste of the tropical fruits, and, above all, the lights that began to shine in the town, made a most charming contrast to our sojourn on the island; and the doctor and the squire, taking me along with them, went ashore to pass the early part of the night. Here they met the captain of an English man-of-war, fell in talk with him, went on board his ship, and, in short, had so agreeable a time that day was breaking when we came alongside the Hispaniola.

Ben Gunn was on deck alone, and, as soon as we came on board, he began, with wonderful contortions, to make us a confession. Silver was gone. The maroon had connived at his escape in a shore-boat some hours ago, and he now assured us he had only done so to preserve our lives, which would certainly have been forfeited if "that man with the one leg had stayed aboard." But this was not all. The sea-cook

had not gone empty-handed. He had cut through a bulkhead unobserved, and had removed one of the sacks of coin, worth, perhaps, three or four hundred guineas, to help him on his further wanderings.

I think we were all pleased to be so cheaply quit of him.

Well, to make a long story short, we got a few hands on board, made a good cruise home, and the Hispaniola reached Bristol just as Mr. Blandly was beginning to think of fitting out her consort. Five men only of those who had sailed returned with her. "Drink and the devil had done for the rest," with a vengeance; although, to be sure, we were not quite in so bad a case as that other ship they sung about:

"With one man of the crew alive
What put to sea with seventy-five."

All of us had an ample share of the treasure, and used it wisely or foolishly, according to our natures. Captain Smollett is now retired from the sea. Gray not only saved his money, but, being suddenly smit with the desire to rise, also studied his profession; and he is now mate and part owner of a fine full-rigged ship; married besides, and the father of a family. As for Ben Gunn, he got a thousand pounds, which he spent or lost in three weeks, or, to be more exact, in nineteen days, for he was back begging on the twentieth. Then he was given a lodge to keep, exactly as he had fared upon the island; and he still lives, a great favorite, though something of a butt, with the country boys, and a notable singer in church on Sundays and saints' days.

Of Silver we have heard no more. That formidable seafaring man with one leg has at last gone clean out of my life; but I dare say he met his old negress, and perhaps still lives in comfort with her and Captain Flint. It is to be hoped so, I suppose, for his chances of comfort in another world are very small.

The bar silver and the arms still lie, for all that I know, where Flint buried them; and certainly they shall lie there for me. Oxen

and wain-ropes would not bring me back again to that accursed island; and the worst dreams that ever I have are when I hear the surf booming about its coasts, or start upright in bed, with the sharp voice of Captain Flint still ringing in my ears, "Pieces of eight! pieces of eight!"

Howard Palmer Tolle
Savannah
Ga
Hiptenry